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How are the Collaborative Efforts of the Transition Plan Team Viewed by Its Members

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**HOW ARE THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF
THE TRANSITION PLAN TEAM VIEWED
BY ITS MEMBERS?**

by

Teresa Henderson, B.S., M.S. Ed.

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education: Educational Leadership

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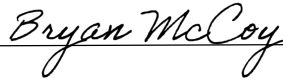
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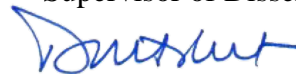
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ABSTRACT

The views of a transition/IEP team members of the collaborative efforts of each other have had little or limited viewing. Annually there are approximately six million special education students in the United States of America (Samuels, 2017). While in high school, these students and their transition/IEP team are tasked with preparing them for adult life (U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2018). The team's collaborative efforts are a necessary component of ensuring the success of each student's adult life (Michaels & Ferrara, 2005).

For students to find success after high school, all transition/IEP team members need to collaborate as best as possible on behalf of the student. Best practices state that collaboration is a key to successful outcomes in any team environment (Arndt et al., 2006). By observing the collaborative efforts of a transition/IEP team, using each team members' meeting reflection as a catalyst for questioning, and conducting interviews with each team member, then repeating the process to determine if self-reflection and talking through that reflection can improve collaborative efforts in future meetings by all team members was the focus of this study.

Findings indicated that not all team members are equally knowledgeable of services and agencies available to students with intellectual disabilities and their families. This lack of knowledge as perceived by team members was the most important reason

collaboration was unequal for all team members. Additional research is needed to determine if effectively educating team members, specifically, parents would improve all team members' collaborative efforts.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Topic and Rationale

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2000* (IDEA) stated that school districts were mandated to formulate a transition plan for special education (SPED) students that outlines the services necessary for students age 14 and up to move from high school to work successfully or post-secondary education (USDOE, 2016). The most recent revision of the IDEA was in 2004 and changed the mandatory age for transition planning to no later than age 16 (USDOE, 2018). Nationwide, the number of students with intellectual disabilities successfully moving from high school into the workforce or post-secondary education is low, even more so in the southern United States. In 2015, it was reported by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that only 17.5% of persons with disabilities were employed nationally as compared to 64% of those with no disability (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016).

The National Council on Disability (2000) reported that at least 90% of high schools nationwide were not in compliance with IDEA in the area of transition planning. Andersson et al. (2000) stated that students with intellectual disabilities are more likely to be employed after high school if they received comprehensive vocational training and

obtained a job at the time of graduation. This objective can only be accomplished with adequate transition planning provided by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.

The transition plan's main objective is to provide instruction and interventions necessary for students with intellectual disabilities to acquire the skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education settings or to obtain and maintain employment (Riesen et al., 2014). Elements of best practices in transition planning cited by these studies include elements of (a) teacher leadership, (b) student self-awareness and advocacy, (c) parent knowledge, (d) team commitment and collaboration, and (e) community involvement (Arndt et al., 2006; Boswell & Stern, 2011; Flannery et al., 2015; Gothberg et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2013). Many studies have identified the benefits of collaboration, whether in the regular education setting or the SPED setting (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015; Gould, 2015; Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016; Michaels & Ferrara, 2005; Morgan, 2016). Given the importance of cooperation among members of the transition planning team, this research aimed to identify how the collaborative efforts of the transition planning team view by its members during the development of the transition/IEP plan.

Background of the Problem

Assumptions

Several assumptions can be made before conducting the study. Kinsella-Meier and Gala (2016) define collaboration as a long-term partnership with shared goals. The transition planning team exemplifies the need for a collaborative relationship between all team members. The most prevalent assumption revolves around the transition plan/IEP

and the effect on postsecondary outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and community stakeholders improves the chances of a positive outcome. This exercise's primary purpose was to allow each student with intellectual disabilities to leave high school trained and adept at a particular skill set, letting them enter the workforce or attend college. Another assumption was the leadership role SPED teachers innately assume in this process. They become the manager of the IEP team and the transition process. Leaders need to be supportive and responsive to their followers' needs (Hersey et al., 2013). Teacher leaders play this important role throughout the IEP team meetings and implementation of the transition plan. Another assumption was the level of community partners' involvement. Community partners are a part of the IEP team and provide the necessary hands-on skills experience to ensure job readiness for high school students with intellectual disabilities entering the workforce.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study included several factors in examining transition planning. The study was designed around high school students with intellectual disabilities with transition plans due to the implementation age mandate. There may be middle school students with intellectual disabilities with transition plans; most high school students with intellectual disabilities do have transition plans. Participant identification was also designated by high school students with intellectual disabilities with transition plans and the IEP team members. Participants were found within a specific region of the southern United States. The data focus was scrutinized through the

lens of critical theory to identify collaborative activities among team members in developing a transition plan.

Limitations

The limitations to the study were subjective to the nature of critical theory. A result of critical theory is that it can lead to researcher bias. The viewpoint and values of a researcher can impact the generalization of data being interpreted. This interpretation can affect the study's reliability and validity. In keeping true to qualitative research, each case is to be considered unique. Findings in one case cannot be used to make assumptions about every transition team but can be used to generalize or assert similar cases (Stake, 1995). Findings were reported one case at a time.

Context of the Problem

The United States provides education to nearly 21 million children each year. Nearly six million of those students are special education (SPED) students that may receive supplemental aids and services (USDOE, 2016).

“The term supplemental aids and services means aids, services, or other supports provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.” (Wright & Wright, 2009, p. 55)

For a student with intellectual disabilities to move successfully from high school to college or the workforce, a detailed transition plan is needed that not only outlines a course of study in a specific career field but also provides hands-on experience in that field before graduation. The transition plan is a document that works in conjunction with the IEP. The IEP team will accept or revise the IEP and the transition plan. The

transition plan should be in line with the student's desired career path and includes vocational training and hands-on experience within that career (Bateman & Cline, 2016; Wright & Wright, 2009).

The IEP team consists of the students with intellectual disabilities, the student's parents, one SPED teacher, school administrator, known as the officially designated representative or ODR, one regular education teacher, an interpreter if necessary, and any service providers. Any community member that provides training may also be a part of the IEP team if parental permission to attend is granted (Bateman & Cline, 2016; Wright & Wright, 2009).

Michaels and Ferrara (2005) assert that for a transition plan to be effective, it needs to be person-centered or focused on the individual students with intellectual disabilities, which promotes collaboration between all team members. Effective collaboration is necessary to improve learning outcomes (Morgan, 2016). Morgan (2016) also asserts that collaborators need to share goals, resources, and decision-making to model professional and social skills to benefit the student.

Validation

The National Council on Disability commissioned a study by Andersson et al. (2000) to determine students with intellectual disabilities in the United States. This study reported that many youths with disabilities leave high school with little or no job skills training and little hope of furthering their education. Annually, about six million students with disabilities have services provided through federally-supported special education programs. These students, between the ages of 6 and 21, represent 8.7% of the United States population (USDOE, 2016). Special education students are less likely than their

regular education peers to be prepared for what life after high school is like (Andersson et al., 2000). Despite many improvements in education, youths with disabilities continue to experience a poor post-high school outcome. Even with advances in education, disability rights, federal mandates, and increased program funding, students with intellectual disabilities struggle to find adequate employment after high school (Hughes, 2008).

This concern is still relevant today, considering the recommendations of several government agencies. The National Council on Disability's recommendations to Congress and the President, as recently as March of 2010, suggested reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act (Quigley, 2010). In this recommendation, several key issues mention transition-age youth and the need for further research to identify transition plan components directly correlate with improved postsecondary outcomes for youths with disabilities. Andersson et al. (2000) state that under IDEA, each school district is mandated to formulate a transition plan that outlines the student's services to move from high school to work or post-secondary education successfully. While at the same time, the Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE, 2016) reports that the requirements of the law with the toughest relation to improved education results for students with disabilities includes addressing the establishment of transition services to allow students with disabilities to move successfully from school to post-high school independence.

Unfortunately, data shows patterns of declining graduation rates over the years, more significantly in the southeastern United States (USDOE, 2017). With the enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities increasing, those graduating high school with diplomas decreased (Samuels, 2017). Only 27% of special education students in the southeastern United States receive a high school diploma compared to

75% of students in general education. On average, 17% of special education students drop out of high school altogether compared to the 6.5% dropout rate of regular education students in 2014 (USDOE, 2016). The increasing rate of out-of-school youths with disabilities creates a small group of people unable to obtain a job due to a lack of skills. Over the years in SPED, a persistent history has shown that at least 40% of SPED graduates received no vocational services after high school, and 94% still lived with their parents. By 1985 research in this area had identified the need to improve the transition process for youths with disabilities from school to work, post-secondary education, and community living (Andersson et al., 2000).

Andersson et al. (2000) findings, nearly two decades later, are still relevant. In relation to this study, they show that there has been a documented persistent need for improvement in SPED transition planning since 1975 (Andersson et al., 2000). Although improvements have been made in this forty-two-year period, there is still room to improve current practices to promote continued progress. This study examines how members of the transition planning team utilize collaboration during the IEP and the transition plan and determine what administration can do to help promote a greater effort of collaboration between members of the transition plan/EP team.

The Purpose and Rationale for the Study

The purpose of this research was to identify how members of the transition planning team viewed collaborative efforts during the IEP and the transition plan. Observation of the IEP meeting, interviews with the IEP team members, and accompanying documents were used to develop a theory that explained the process. This type of methodology allowed for a deep understanding of a process shaped by the

participants' views or the IEP team members. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to identify how members of the transition planning team viewed collaborative efforts during the IEP as well as the transition plan and to determine what administration can do to help promote a greater effort of collaboration between members of the transition/EP team that are being implemented in transition planning for high school students with intellectual disabilities.

Significance of Research Problem

Studying the collaboration efforts used in developing and implementing an effective transition plan for students with intellectual disabilities in high school provided valuable insight for educators in implementing best practices for positive post-secondary outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities. The IEP team's ability to work together to prepare a student for the workforce, post-secondary education, and possible independence allowed me, the researcher, to focus on interpreting the data collected. This data was used to formulate an idea of the collaboration efforts to be used in transition planning, including the individual participants' parts.

Patton (2015) states social critique is what classifies research as being critical; its goal becomes to eliminate unwarranted tendencies and enhance the opportunities for human potential to be realized, and that qualitative research must adapt strategies to meet different challenges: thinking strategies, enhancing powers of observation, becoming more astute. These are not just research methods but also life skills that provide a deeper understanding for engaging effectively in the world. The research was substantiated when knowledge was gained by interpreting the data collected (Patton, 2015). Michaels and

Ferrara (2005) states that the qualitative study's evaluation process can only help stakeholders better understand and better inform the process needed to obtain goals.

Methods and Research Question

This study sought to examine and identify the collaboration efforts of the transition plan members of high school students with intellectual disabilities. As the study evolved, a narrower view came into focus; however, initially, many questions came to mind about this topic.

1. What are the collaborative efforts exhibited in the transition planning process?
2. What are the challenges to collaboration in the transition planning process?
3. What are the perceptions of collaboration by the transition planning team both before and after reflection?

Above all, qualitative research follows one of two leads: it is either interpretive, development of ideas about the findings and relating them to the literature to broaden concerns and concepts; or it is positive, affirming assumptions already made (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Often qualitative research is used to describe, decode, and develop meaning from gathered data that can be interpreted to understand shared social constructs (Rowlands, 2005). The theoretical framework focuses on selecting relationships among such constructs, that when grouped, enables users to see their structure with little effort (Whetten, 1989). Rowlands (2005) states the following are building blocks used to establish this theoretical framework: (a) discovering the elements that should be part of the explanation, (b) the elements relate to each other, and (c) the limitations generated by the data.

The use of critical theory allowed a thorough overview of the transition planning process and informed further inquiry. Using an observational case study process did “involve specific procedures for data collection and analysis that included continual data sampling, coding, categorizing, and comparing to generate theory about some social phenomena” (Rowlands, 2005, p. 21). The research process repeats itself to develop conceptual categories further, adjusting the theory with each new data set (Glesne, 2011). Critical theory was appropriate because the study was focused on explaining, contextualizing, and process orientation of transition planning (Rowlands, 2005).

Definition of Key Concepts

The definitions in this section are of key terms relevant to the practice of transition planning within the SPED field. These terms are a true representation of how they were used in the context of this study.

1. Collaborate: to work with another person or group to achieve or do something (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).
2. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA: a federal law regarding education for students with disabilities, most recently reauthorized in 2004 (Bateman & Cline, 2016).
3. Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP): an individualized accommodation plan is based on assessment data to bridge student learning barriers. It includes three types of accommodations: (a) test-taking, (b) assignment-projects completion, and (c) study – class preparation (Wright & Wright, 2009).

4. Individualized Education Program: the IEP is seen as a contract between parents of students with disabilities and the school district. It lists the educational and intervention services provided to the student and designates the types and number of services provided. It is the most important document for a student with disabilities (Bateman & Cline, 2016).
5. IEP Team: the team that develops and oversees a student's IEP. It consists of a SPED teacher, a regular education teacher, parents or guardians, a student, an administration member, and any agencies that provide services to the student (Bateman & Cline, 2016).
6. Iota: issues in a case study derived from the actual study (Stake, 1995).
7. Learning Disability (LD): a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations (Kurtz Center, 2012).
8. Long Term Objectives (LTO): designed based on student's skill needs to meet goals set in place by the IEP and transition plan (USDOE, 2017).
9. Secondary Education: education beyond elementary grades; provided by a high school or college preparatory school (Farlex Free Dictionary, n.d.a.)
10. Special education (SPED): education modified for those with disabilities or exceptional needs; as handicapped people or gifted children
11. Theta: issues selected to be studied in a case study (Stake, 1995).
12. VOTAC: Vocational Transitional Autism Curriculum specialists, a term specific to this school district.

13. Vocational Evaluation: testing a student's aptitude for various areas of work (Bateman & Cline, 2016).
14. Vocational Training: training for a specific vocation in industry, agriculture, or trade (Farlex Free Dictionary, n.d.b.).

Outline of the Study

This qualitative study sought to answer the question: *How Are the Collaborative Efforts of the Transition Plan/IEP Team Viewed by Its Members?* The following is an outline of the literature review and methodology. Chapter 2 focused on the literature review. It is based on the understanding of SPED numbers nationally, the distinction of exceptionalities, the role of the Federal Government in supporting vocational training for high school students with intellectual disabilities and the IEP team's collaborative role in the transition planning process based on best practices. In Chapter 3, the methods used to research this topic rest heavily on critical theory. Using a single observational case to identify individual collaborative efforts is rooted in the idea that knowledge can be gained from observing and analyzing the data collected. Chapter 4 focused on the analyses of data and was described in great detail. Chapter 5 is a dialogue of the research findings. It references previous studies, makes suggestions for future studies, and conclusions were drawn.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of practice identified for the study aided in defining the research topic and the literature necessary to support it. This literature review has identified the areas of concern for transition planning. It has also identified best practices that previous studies have identified in the transition planning process (Landmark et al., 2010).

Theoretical Framework

Postmodernism Theory

Postmodernism was considered for this study because it is used in educational research to understand educational practices in real-time. Ultimately, the researcher becomes a participant, identifies their practices, and develops ideals to improve practices within the field (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009). This framework's application for educational purposes is defined by Creswell (1998), who suggested that truth can be socially constructed in the course of understanding natural human experiences in context and discovering whether or not it will lead to practical change. As recently as 2009, McNiff and Whitehead argued that this type of educational theory, when put into action, leads to a better understanding of practices and real-time issues in the field of education.

However, this study is not ideal because the participation level needed would not lend itself to this application.

Transformative Learning Theory

In consideration of this study, Freire's (2014) model of Transformative Learning (TL) was a thought-provoking model to utilize. He considered TL as a means of getting people to develop their life's work. He used it in Third World settings with subjects with low adult literacy rates to transform society into an equitable place for everyone (Freire, 2014). Since most transition planning is performed at the high school level and most students with intellectual disabilities are older than their peers, it might be applicable. This might connect directly into the self-advocacy and self-determination skills that interestingly tie into advancing post-secondary outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities by taking more responsibility for their future.

Alternatively, it may be that parents and teachers involved in this process will not want to mark their personal growth in this study. It is foreseeable they might not be compelled to delve into the reflection process required of the theory. Although Edwards and Walker (2014) sees this process as a means to liberate oneself through discovery, some adults in the transition planning process may find it unpleasant. This theory did not seem to meet the direction the study needed.

Afrocentrism Theory

Afrocentrism theory is rooted in the belief that African people need to be culturally aware of their origins, historically, economically, socially, politically, and philosophically. It is derived from Molefe Asante's writings, who is a professor at Temple University and a contributor to many theories deriving from African studies.

Afrocentrism's suggested use is to immerse oneself in the culture and social aspects of African culture to find the best understanding. It is recommended for researchers of African descent (Mkabela, 2005).

It was not believed that Afrocentrism theory would be pertinent to this study. However, some issues might arise that relate to African American culture in this region of the United States regarding education and socio-economic background. Such issues can and do play a part in parents' participation in their students with intellectual disabilities' IEPs and transition planning. It will be better to look through a lens that views the process of transition planning rather than one that sees race or gender as an issue. It is not the intent of this study to delve into quantitative analysis that requires the gender or ethnicity of participants. This study's interest was in the transition planning process and whether it provided an adequate foundation for students with intellectual disabilities to find gainful employment or move into post-secondary education after high school. This researcher believes that the transition plan was the key instrument in providing that ability.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) is the study of relationships among race, racism, and power. This theory is concerned with civil rights and ethnic studies but places them in a comprehensive viewpoint. CRT began as a movement in the mid-1970s and realized a new look was needed to identify subtle forms of racism (Delgado et al., 2006). There are three features to CRT: (a) ordinariness, (b) interest convergence, and (c) social construction (Delgado et al., 2006).

It was not believed this theory relates to my research topic. My research deals with improving the collaborative efforts of all team members of IEPs for students with intellectual disabilities. Students with special needs that require specific job training should all be able to receive the same services regardless of their ethnicity or disability (McAfee & Greenawalt, 2001; Mkabela, 2005).

Critical Theory

Critical theory (CT) strives to understand how society works, seeks to know how the world works and how it can be changed for the better. The Frankfurt School of Germany was where critical theory emerged following Marxism's traditions (Bronner, 2011). Marxism began as a school of thought over the labor problems that prevailed following the Russian Revolution. The idea of Marxism was founded in 1923 as "The Institute for Social Research" (Bronner, 2011 p. 9). Publications of the group delved heavily into the labor movement and social reform. The majority of its members were communist and hoped for a unified German Soviet Republic (Bronner, 2011). By 1930 a new group had evolved and become known as the Frankfurt School. Bronner continues by stating that it mostly dealt with economic status and power (Bronner, 2011). It is closely related to feminist theory, queer theory, critical race theory, and media theory related to media studies (Bronner, 2011).

While the focus was not on social science issues, it focused on how the system was already used and how suggestions for improvement occur (Tyson, 2015). Because of efficacy, critical theory was selected for this research. The SPED population is increasing within society, and government funds and resources should be used to their fullest potential to enable young adults with disabilities to be productive citizens

(Samuels, 2017). An investigation of how collaborative practices in the transition planning process was used to improve outcomes for the student with disabilities was identified.

Theories Summary

A review of the theories led to narrowing the focus of the research. Critical theory was best suited for the study of collaborative practices in transition planning and would greatly enhance the research methodology. Further study of critical theory aided in structuring the methodology and the reflection of the research process.

Critical Theory for this Research Design

Critical theory is a form of social research that began in 1923, with its origins rooted in Marxism (Bronner, 2011). It began in what was called the Frankfurt School, whose leading figures included Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas. Horkheimer (1990) believed in interdisciplinary research and that misery and delivering possibilities greatly affected individual experience. Another major contributor to critical theory is Adorno, who was considered the most prolific writer of his time at influencing and understanding critical theory (Bronner, 2011). Adorno (1976) believed in accurate communication. He intended to articulate the flaws within society without identifying individuals. Habermas was a student of both Adorno and Horkheimer, and he was considered one of the most influential writers on the merits of critical theory (Bronner, 2011). Habermas wrote about many of the facets of social life and contemporary issues of his day. The focus of Habermas's (1983) writings was often critical of institutions and the relationship between theory and practice. This was believed to result from his having grown up in Germany during Hitler's reign (Bronner, 2011).

All of these men believed in intellectual daring and experimental quality as it directly related to CT. In their visions, critical theory transformed human experiences into a rational organization that gave itself illumination and legitimacy (Bronner, 2011). It identifies already existing ways of life and identifies the potentials of what could be ahead (Bronner, 2011).

Critical theory was coined as a form of concealment in the West because it derived from Marxism. The Frankfurt School and its members moved west to the United States to escape Europe during World War II. They advocated for the working class to reform social injustices (Bronner, 2011). By 1947, the works of the Western Marxists expressed how scientific rationality exercises freedom from the historical process and allows the abstract, which is revered as concrete, to infiltrate every aspect of society. In other words, looking at society through a scientific process will allow the researcher to overlook historical factors as an influence and focus on the elements unfolding in the present as independent influences (Bronner, 2011). Horkheimer and Adorno's perspectives on critical theory emphasized that research goes to the "root" of the problem to gain enlightenment (Bronner, 2011). Adorno advocated for the use of interactions or reasonable discussion as a means of intellectual investigation. They discover that in each critical theory study, a unique meaning is found for that specific time and cannot be the same again. It is also believed that conditions cannot be reproduced but must be revealed as they happen (Bronner, 2011). Critical theory can follow many hidden agendas to find discrepancies in the inner workings of what is studied (Sim & Von Loon, 2012).

Critical theory has many aspects and includes many subgroups that can be used to explain the way a certain group interacts within the structures of society, especially as

they relate to education (Bronner, 2011). It strives to find commonalities within the human experience. Many subgroups have derived from the principles of critical theory, including Feminism, Structuralism, Queer theory, Deconstructivism, and Afro-Americanism, to name a few. The views of these theories overlap and lend themselves to identifying known and unknown representations that support or challenge meanings found in a methodological study of societal norms. The ultimate goal of all forms of critical theory is to broaden understanding of the human experience (Tyson, 2015).

By using critical theory to investigate the workings of transition planning, it allowed the same basic paradigm to be examined and explained by the differing views and opinions of participating stakeholders. This coincides with CT's origins in Marxism which considers that human behavior has a great deal to do with human experiences and can be attributed to socioeconomic influences. The critical theory goes beyond this and uses these experiences to explain how assumptions and values are formed (Tyson, 2015). Critical theory often has hidden tensions of idealism versus materialism and tends to have a hidden unconsciousness. Most of all, though, critical theory implies that this level of scrutiny can make a difference (Sim & Von Loon, 2012).

The art of critical theory naturally lends itself to reflection. It has a straightforward path of clearly explained inquiry. This leads to the reflection of the reality being studied and leaves no room for experimentation (Bronner, 2011). Sim and Von Loon (2012) believe structuralism can be used as a means to identify underlying meanings in the narrative. It relates narrative as an everyday fact of life that can be studied and bring forth new meanings based on the readers' intent. With this in mind, critical theory can be used to formulate an understanding of what is being studied (Sim &

Von Loon, 2012). The lens of critical theory and its reflective tendencies form a natural progression to the educational process study of transition planning. This study also investigated Servant/transformational Leadership Theory as it applies to the reflective and collaborative efforts of IEP team members in transition planning.

Leadership Style Application

Elements of Leadership

As established in the literature, three elements consistently make up the desired factors of leadership. These elements are often intertwined to produce what the literature considers affective leadership. Affective leadership embodies elements of innate traits, learned skills, and an awareness of the perceptions of followers.

Traits

For a long time, it was widely believed that great leaders were born, not made, that there were certain discernible traits great leaders were born with that propelled them to be successful leaders (Marron & Cunniff, 2014). Most studies of leadership theory focused on what a leader should be instead of what it actually is. This led to dozens of lists of dozens of traits that represented what a leader should be (Berger, 2014).

Important characteristic traits include honesty, responsibility, persistence, optimism, and confidence (Smith & Chenoweth, 2015). Sun et al. (2017) suggest that these and other traits can be found cross-culturally, emphasizing that desirable leadership traits are universally recognizable.

McElravy and Hastings (2014) identified five factors of personality that are equated to innate traits: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. They go on to evaluate a correlation between personality factors and

leadership abilities linking it to emotional intelligence. Their definition of emotional intelligence is a person's ability to evaluate their own as well as others' emotions to successfully cope with the demands of a given situation. They identify emotional intelligence traits relative to youths: "adaptability, affective disposition, emotion expression, emotion regulation, self-control, quality peer relations, self-esteem, and self-motivation" (McElravy & Hastings, 2014 p. 143). Emotional intelligence was pointedly linked to higher levels of organizational outcomes and lower levels of workplace stress (McElravy & Hastings, 2014). In their study, McElravy and Hastings (2014) initiated self-evaluation in youth leaders in an agricultural community that recognized emotional intelligence as a high-ranking trait in self-evaluative leadership skills.

Marron and Cunniff (2014) suggest that leadership within the education field must be adaptable to changing demographics and complex issues. They developed the acronym "HELPPSS" to identify traits of an innovative leader: "heart, empathy, learning, passion, perseverance, strategy and speed" (Marron & Cunniff, 2014 p. 146). They advocate that heart within an educational setting is essential to morale and relationship development. Empathy is defined by the way a leader treats others and engages with followers in friendly ways. Growing through learning allows leaders to adapt to an ever-changing workplace. The lack of visible passion for the job can influence followers, so; there needs to be a recognizable level of work-related passion. Perseverance is necessary as the demands for accountability rise within the education field. Leaders need to be able to survive a crisis. Planning and implementing strategies alongside followers are essential to an educational leader's success. The ability to implement these traits speedily is a trait worthy of peer recognition. Educational leaders with these traits are considered

innovative and worthy of high-ranking positions. Their abilities are crucial in creating success for teachers and students (Marron & Cunniff, 2014).

Newer leadership theories emphasize a focus on the leadership traits of morality and ethics (Mumford & Fried, 2014). These traits are seen to offer a positive prosocial model of what a leader should embody, socially acceptable morals and ethics. Hannah et al. (2014) advocate that morality is a requirement of leadership but that it is not solely liable for leadership. Berger (2014) identifies ethical practices in leadership as essential and that these practices are not primarily focused on outcomes but on people. The traits of morality and ethics can even be illuminated cross-culturally (Hannah et al., 2014), an example of which includes gangs that possess a code of honor, no matter how skewed from societal norms, still focuses on ethics.

Whereas leadership traits are considered intuitive and an indispensable component of any leadership theory, there are still elements of leadership quality that can be learned. These elements represent skills that universities and corporations have strived to teach leaders for generations (Hobson et al., 2014).

Skills

Across professions, including but not limited to agriculture, business, education, medicine, and religion, the study of leadership has produced many works that emphasize various necessary skills to be an effective leader. Leadership skills are considered the foundation for any leader's individual style (Marron & Cunniff, 2014). The effectiveness of these skills is delineated in the literature beyond general conceptual knowledge and accentuates the need for practice (Hobson et al., 2014).

One skill considered crucial to effective leadership is teamwork (Hobson et al., 2014). Hobson et al. (2014) conducted a study of business graduate students that considered teamwork fundamental to leadership success in the corporate arena. In their study, they focused on the acquisition of factual knowledge as well as procedural knowledge of teamwork and repeated practice, believing that this is the only way to integrate the skill appropriately.

Zakaria et al. (2015) considered skills such as planning, communication, organization, and decision making as important skills required of leaders. They also identify as a skill that leaders should be extremely knowledgeable in the content of their specific field. Another skill identified by Zakaria et al. (2015) is interpersonal relationship skills as a means of motivating followers to perform at the desired rate. The ability to interact with and establish relationships with followers lends itself to emotional intelligence and is studied through the lens of followers' perceptions (Zakaria et al., 2015).

Followers' Perceptions

In most recent history, the study of leadership has grown to include theories such as Transformational Leadership theory (Sun et al., 2017) and Servant Leadership theory (Saglam & Alpaydin, 2017). The primary focus of these theories is the impact of follower perceptions of leadership and its effect on leadership style. The focus of these theories and others like them is more toward the leader's ability to meet the needs and perceptions of needs from the follower resulting in a relationship established in trust (Keskinkilic-Kara & Zafer-Gunes, 2017). The ability of leaders to develop and deploy personality qualities into their dealings with followers alongside skills and traits will

enhance the leadership experience for all parties (Dolgova et al., 2016). The primary purpose of this view of leadership is to connect with followers in a way that is inspiring and motivational towards the established organizational goals (Sun et al., 2017). The building of relationships is a key to successful leadership in this emerging leadership style (Willemberg, 2014) and recognizes the active role followers perform in the leadership process (Hannah et al., 2014). Cavazotte et al. (2012) argue that emotional intelligence is the leader's ability to positively relate to their emotions, as well as followers', generates a greater likelihood of being an effective leader. The general focus of this avenue is leaders' specific interactions with specific followers and how the followers perceive these actions (Mumford & Fried, 2014).

Leader Behaviors

Background

For centuries, leadership styles have been studied and defined based on the contributing characteristics of leaders (Saglam & Alpaydin, 2017). However, in the most recent 30 years of leadership research, there has been a focal shift from the leader to the follower (Sun et al., 2017). Two of the emerging theories in this shift have been servant leadership theory (Saglam & Alpaydin, 2017) and transformational leadership theory (Sun et al., 2017). The two different styles of leadership have distinct differences and similarities.

A review of literature advocates that productive leadership outcomes are reinforced by leadership behaviors that are aligned with the perceptions that followers have of leaders. The focus of both servant leadership and transformational leadership has

been studied to develop theories identifying their effectiveness in motivating followers to achieve a shared organizational vision as well as shared goals.

The following section is a discussion of emerging themes across the literature that emphasize the focus of servant leadership and transformational leadership on followers' perceptions of leaders. The behaviors of servant leaders are characterized by the commitment of the leader for followers (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014), while the characterization of transformational leaders is concentrated on the leader's ability to motivate followers in alignment with their own goals (Sun et al., 2017). Both are centrally focused on the follower (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership emphasizes the need for shared power and vision between the leader and the follower (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). It is also focused on the leader's commitment to the development of followers' spiritual and service-oriented growth (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). The servant-leader puts the needs of others before themselves and has a proclivity to share decision-making power (Fitzgerald, 2015). Important characteristics of the servant leader are to listen and to identify with followers (Fitzgerald, 2015). Van Dierendonck et al. (2014) state that servant leaders rely on close personal relationships with followers that cultivate the best qualities of followers to motivate them to meet their full potential within the organizational framework. Servant leaders are often perceived as selfless with a focus on the group gains that instills confidence and trust from the members of the group (Fitzgerald, 2015). Fitzgerald (2015) goes even further to suggest that the servant leader's personal growth is encapsulated within the growth of their followers. The servant leader's engagement and

commitment to followers (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014) is embedded in characteristics such as listening, empathy, awareness, and healing (Fitzgerald, 2015), to name a few. Their primary focus, to serve others, epitomizes a shared journey of responsibility and outcomes (Fitzgerald, 2015). Where servant leadership's primary focus is the needs of followers, transformational leadership's primary focus is organizational effectiveness through follower motivation (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory has been an important field of study for several decades (Cavazotte et al., 2012). Its effectiveness is centered on fostering innovation and trust within an organization (Sun et al., 2017). Transformational leaders are expected to understand interpersonal relationships to inspire followers to actively seek change (Saxena, 2014). It is their responsibility to create a work environment that fosters trust and initiative (Sun et al., 2017). Sun et al. (2017) identified the main characteristics of the transformational leader as charisma and motivation, while Saxena (2014) also identified encouragement and perceived intellect. Leadership and the leader are the primary focus in this process (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Saxena (2014) states that transformational leadership is positively predicted by the leader's personality. Their effectiveness can often be predicted by their personality traits (Saxena, 2014). The ability of the transformational leader to use innate leadership traits, learned skill sets, and emotional reasoning is essential to success (Sun et al., 2017). Although the focus of transformational leadership and servant leadership are not the same, there are similarly overlapping factors common to each (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014).

Overlapping Behavioral Factors

Whereas servant leadership's primary focus is the follower and transformational leadership's is the leader, there are many overlapping common factors of both that are important to effective and perceived leadership behavior (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Both transformational and servant leadership focus on the followers. The transformational leader is often looked upon by followers as a role model (Saxena, 2014), while the servant leader models the behaviors they desire in followers (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Another way the two are similar is that they both extend leadership beyond the organizational setting (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). In other words, the perceived qualities the follower sees in the leader are encouraged to be emulated and recreated in the follower's personal life. Servant leadership does this by motivating followers to live the servant lifestyle beyond the organization and extend it into the community (Fitzgerald, 2015). The transformational leader is accepted as role-models that promote a social and adventure-seeking attitude that transforms beyond the workplace (Saxena, 2014). Both the servant leader and the transformational leader are adept at explaining the task. The servant leader's desire to altruistically serve others leads them to encourage and motivate others to attain organizational goals through modeling and one-on-one communication (Fitzgerald, 2015). Influence and focused explanations are the transformational leader's approach to task engagement to ensure organizational goals are met (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Ensuring shared vision and outcomes are also important to both types of leadership. The transformational leader uses the self-interests of followers to create a shared vision that inspires them to be proactive and creative toward accomplishing shared goals (Saxena, 2014). The goals of the servant leader are to

certify that there is a consensus within the organization group to have the same vision/goal (Fitzgerald, 2015). Different attributes of transformational and servant leadership are responsible for ensuring affective outcomes, followers' engagement, as well as their commitment to the organization (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Both styles of leadership exemplify behaviors in the leader that the followers perceive to be encouraging and agreeable, exuding trust, compliance, and cooperation (Saxena, 2014).

Servant/Transformational Leadership Conclusions

The ability of both servant leadership and transformational leadership to motivate and engage followers is evident throughout the literature. Similarities and differences between servant leadership and transformational leadership are prominent aspects of followers' perceptions of effective leadership behaviors. The literature identifies the effectiveness of both servant leadership and transformational leadership styles.

Cavazotte et al. (2012) concluded that transformational leaders' behaviors were directly aligned with leadership effectiveness and, as compared to servant leadership which is indicative of followers' needs, was perceived to be more effective. The creativity of the transformational leader is seen as an elemental means of promoting creativity in followers (Saxena, 2014). Not unlike transformation leadership, servant leaders are committed to the development of trust, respect, and ethical behavior from individuals within the organization (Fitzgerald, 2015). The ability of leaders to influence the behaviors of followers is agreeable to like or desired traits identified by followers in their leader (Saxena, 2014). The characteristics of affective leadership, whether they be inherited traits or learned skills, all apply toward the perception followers have of leaders and affect their ability to follow. Leadership should be based on the specific needs of

followers at a given moment. The behavior of the leader changes as the need/goals changes (Hannah et al., 2014).

Qualitative Research

Merriam (2009) suggests that the research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the viewpoints of those being studied offers the greatest potential of making a difference in people's lives. Basic research's main purpose is to know more about a phenomenon. Applied research is commenced to improve the quality practice of a specific discipline (Merriam, 2009).

The difference between evaluation and research, which are both forms of methodical inquiry, lies in the questions asked, for the methods in each is essentially the same. Patton (2015) states that when someone examines and judges accomplishments and effectiveness, they are engaged in evaluation. When this examination of effectiveness is conducted systematically and empirically through careful data collection and thoughtful analysis, they are engaged in evaluation research (Merriam, 2009).

Action research is a form of applied research that has a goal to address a precise problem within an exact setting. This type of research is often conducted by people interested in practical solutions to problems and are interested in social change (Lodico et al., 2010). The interest of qualitative researchers lies in understanding how people interpret their life experiences and what meaning they attribute to those experiences (Merriam, 2009).

The focus of qualitative research is on the quality or natural essence (Merriam, 2009). It is symbolic in its philosophical roots. The primary goal is to understand, discover and generate through the investigation. Design characteristics include

flexibility, evolving and emergent data. The sample should be small, nonrandom, and purposeful. Data collection uses the researcher as a primary instrument as well as observations, interviews, and documents. An analysis is an inductive and relentless comparative method. The findings of which are comprehensive, holistic, expansive, and richly descriptive (Merriam, 2009).

Lodico et al. (2010) suggest that reality is constructed in accordance with the concepts most suitable to our personal experiences. Then, the researcher must try to understand the complex realities from the perspective of the participants. The acceptance of these realities leads social constructivists to maintain that initial questions asked in the study will likely change or be modified as these realities are exposed or recreated during the process of conducting research (Lodico et al., 2010).

Qualitative research often utilizes purposeful sampling (Lodico et al., 2010). This involves the selection of participants who have familiarity or information associated with the purpose of the study. Qualitative research questions are flexible and can change over the course of the research. The researcher is in close contact with the participants to capture their viewpoints through observations, interviews, documents, and data analysis. The researcher concentrates on the exploration and description of the participants in the study rather than trying to simplify the findings to others (Lodico et al., 2010).

The sampling approach to this case study used high school students with intellectual disabilities. Participation was voluntary and required parental consent for this researcher to perform observations and interviews. I did not have any contact directly with a student, and the student's demographic information was not identified, nor does it have a bearing on this case study.

Annual Numbers of Special Education Students

Many youths with disabilities leave the high school setting with little or no job skills training and little hope of furthering their education (Andersson et al., 2000). Annually, about six million students with disabilities have amenities in federally-supported special education. These students, between the ages of 6 and 21, represent 8.7% of the population of the United States (USDOE, 2016). Unfortunately, students with intellectual disabilities are less likely than their regular education peers to be prepared for what life after high school is like (Andersson et al., 2000). Despite many improvements in education, youths with disabilities continue to experience what is considered a poor post-high school outcome, even with advances in education, disability rights, federal mandates, and increased program funding (USDOE, 2017).

Not all that is available for students with disabilities is negative. One specific piece of federal legislation that benefits disabled youth is *the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* of 2004 (Quigley, 2010). Under IDEA, each school district is mandated to formulate a transition plan that outlines the services needed for the student to successfully move from high school to work and/or post-secondary education (Quigley, 2010).

In 2000, the National Council on Disability indicated that 90% of high schools nationwide were not in compliance with IDEA in the area of transitions. In other words, youths with disabilities were not successfully moving from high school to either post-secondary education or employment. While at the same time, the Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE, 2016) noted that the requirements of the law with the strongest association to improved education results for students with intellectual disabilities include contending with the delivery of transition services to empower

students with disabilities to move successfully from school to post-school independence and accomplishments. Andersson et al. (2000) further stated that students with intellectual disabilities were more likely to be employed after high school if they received comprehensive vocational training in high school and had a secured job at the time of graduation.

Unfortunately, the data shows patterns of declining graduation rates over a period of years, more significantly in the southeastern United States. Although the enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities has increased (Samuels, 2017), the percentage that graduates in high school with diplomas is decreasing. For greater detail, see Appendix A. Only 27% of special education students receive a high school diploma in this region compared to 75% of students in general education. On average, 17% of special education students drop out of high school altogether compared to the 6.5% dropout rate of regular education students in 2014 (USDOE, 2016). The ever-increasing rate of out-of-school youths with disabilities creates a segment of the population that is unable to obtain a job due to a lack of skills. On average, 40% of SPED graduates received no vocational services after high school, and 94% still lived with their parents (Samuels, 2017). By 1985 research in this area had initiated the need for improving the transition process for youths with disabilities from school to work, or post-secondary education, and community living (Andersson et al., 2000).

Andersson et al.'s (2000) findings, nearly two decades later, are still relevant. Concerning this study, they show there has been a persistent need for improvement in SPED transition planning since 1975 (Andersson et al., 2000). Although improvements have been made in this forty-two-year period, there is still room to identify current

practices to suggest continued progress. This study did investigate the collaborative efforts of the IEP team in the transition plan process based on the needs outlined in Andersson et al. (2000) that are still relevant today.

Studies on Transition Planning

For nearly 25 years, transition planning services have steadily included assessment, planning, and instruction (Trainor et al., 2016). With initial importance on employment-related outcomes, the current larger focus is readying secondary students with intellectual disabilities for prospects in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living (Trainor et al., 2016). Under IDEA 1997 (USDOE, 1997), an annual update statement of “transition needs” was required beginning at the age of 14 (Madaus & Shaw, 2006). At the age of 16, a “statement of needed transition services” was required to address the requirement that transition services be a coordinated set of instructional activities. However, in 2004, IDEA raised the age of mandated transition planning to no later than 16 (Madaus & Shaw, 2006). Because of ambiguous regulations, there are variations in requirements from state to state and even from district to district for a student’s summary of performance which is needed in transition planning (Madaus & Shaw, 2006). Hughes (2008) showed that employment, community participation, and postsecondary training estimates of students with intellectual disabilities with severe disabilities after leaving high school are the lowest of all disability groupings and compare negatively to those of peers without disabilities. Despite more than 25 years of legislation intended to meliorate the transition from high school to adult life, the problem of adequate transition planning persists.

Post-secondary school outcomes are directly related to many aspects of school programs available, as well as the experiences of youths while attending high school. Some of these experiences are in correlation with the student's disability, while others are connected to low socioeconomic status (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). Data on the employment of youths with disabilities show little modification in their situation once they leave high school. It also shows that it is highly unlikely that those who drop out will ever be employed. These findings point to an absence of expropriating preparation, effective transition planning, appropriate services availability, and job exposure prior to leaving high school (Andersson et al., 2000).

In a study by Haring and Tomlin (1999), interviews with students with intellectual disabilities post-high school mention frequent job changes, a sense of helplessness, and family dependency. Most can only find part-time employment working for minimum wage. With little marketable skills, frustration sets in, and joblessness ensues. This is credited to a lack of proper transition planning (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). For greater clarification, see Appendix B. Likewise, Cortiella and Horowitz (2014) identified that nationally 75% of former students with intellectual disabilities identify the need for services after high school such as post-secondary accommodations, vocational training, placement or support, behavioral interventions, social worker services, and/or mental health services. Cortiella and Horowitz (2014) and Haring and Tomlin (1999) findings examine best practices of transition planning. These studies identify collaboration as a key element to affective transition planning. Future considerations of study could focus on long-term outcomes or the need for post-secondary services that would ensure suitable long-term outcomes.

Transition Planning

The SPED transition movement began in the late 1980s as an acknowledgment to identified postsecondary studies that learned adult outcomes for students with disabilities were unattainable for many (Landmark et al., 2010). Initiatives such as (a) *School to Work Opportunities Act of 1994* (STW), (b) *GOALS 2000, Educate America Act of 1994* (GOALS), and (c) *Improving America's Schools Act of 1994* (IASA), were intended to provide better outcomes for all public-school students (Landmark et al., 2010). The STW was an effort to engage students more thoroughly in education that promotes skills and habits employers value. It operated in partnership with the USDOE and the U.S. Department of Labor and provided money to every state to develop school-to-work transition systems (USDOE, 1997). GOALS (2000) was an education reform that initiated research that would build and implement systemic changes needed in education to provide opportunities and achievement for all students through the development of a national system of skills standards and certifications (USDOE, 1997). The IASA promoted high academic standards. Along with STW and GOALS, it was created to help “schools and communities establish a framework for comprehensive, standard-based education reform for all students” (USDOE, 1997 p. 1).

Reviews of best transition practices included: (a) work experience, (b) employment preparation, (c) family involvement, (d) general education involvement, (e) social skill training, (f) daily living skills training, (g) self-determination skills training, and (h) community or agency collaboration, (Landmark et al., 2010). When interviewed, students with intellectual disabilities identified having a job when exiting high school as a major predictor of later success. One reason this practice does not

happen with frequency is the absence of unsuccessful programs or practices that connect academic and vocational education (Landmark et al., 2010). Transition programs, vocational education, and work-study programs are indicators of constructive post-secondary outcomes, yet schools are reluctant to support these programs because it sees them as separate from the academic path (Landmark et al., 2010).

For over a decade, sound discussion around successful transition planning to adulthood has pointed to the use of transition assessments that lead to appropriate program planning and services for students with disabilities. Transition assessments aid in identifying areas of strength and ability that a student may be predisposed to a particular job skill. These types of assessments are helpful to formulate the needed skills and agency support for the transition plan (Karan et al., 2010).

Transition assessment requires collaboration between SPED teachers and vocational resource entities (Stevenson & Fowler, 2015). This type of collaboration could effectively breakdown barriers in the use of differing terminology. Also, the collaboration between teachers and adult services personnel should enhance communication and knowledge for students and families about postsecondary services. Together teachers, vocational resources personnel, and adult service agencies can improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities (Stevenson & Fowler, 2015).

Transition planning begins when a disabled youth reaches the age of 16 and should be designed to use high school to prepare them for life after high school. Their freshman year of high school is a critical performance year. Low GPAs, poor attendance, and fewer than five credit hours earned in one semester are indicators of potential

dropouts. Many students with intellectual disabilities express post-secondary goals similar to their peers without disabilities (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). These goals include attending college, attending vocational training, the desire to be competitively employed, and living independently (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). The timeline for this planning can begin as early as age 14 with the exploration of life options that pertain to job expectations, as well as academic options. Disabled youth in high school should focus on the type of academics needed for their post-secondary choices. If choosing post-secondary education options, academic requirements should be the focus in high school. If work is the option, then concentrated vocational training should be the focus (Kallio & Owens, 2012). The focus of transition education and services should be characterized by the following initiatives: (a) federal SPED legislation, (b) federal, state and local investment in transition services development, and (c) effective transition practices, or best practices research (Gothberg et al., 2015).

The development of the transition plan should begin with an interest inventory and/or a vocational evaluation (Bateman & Cline, 2016). This is administered to the students with intellectual disabilities to help determine transitional skills training aligned with the student's aptitude. The results of this inventory should then dictate the Long-Term Objectives (LTO) needed to adequately prepare the student for the workforce. The LTOs should include any vocational training necessary as well as any transitional services needed to prepare the student to perform the specific job he or she is training to do. In addition to determining the LTOs, the inventory should also allow the IEP holder to guide the student when choosing vocational courses that pertain to his or her chosen career field (Bateman & Cline, 2016).

A strong prognosticate of policy compliance, and the use of best practices is the existence of a school-based interagency transition team (McMahan & Baer, 2001). The team meetings should imitate a way to give constructive feedback and resolve conflicts that have beneficial advantages. This feedback should be: (a) mutually respectful, (b) be specific, (c) define what needs to be kept, what needs to be discarded, and what needs improvement, and lastly (d) express the desire to help (Vincent et al., 2015). Meetings are costly, whether within the business world or the education realm. The expense is problematic in that the meeting takes people away from their jobs. Therefore, the meeting should be well planned and executed effectively (Simoneaux & Stroud, 2015). Both the planning and the meeting should involve those it concerns. The student should be an active participant in the planning process because of the impact it has on their life (Espiner & Hartnett, 2011). The meeting should be planned with a purpose, an agenda, and limits. Feedback should come at the end of the meeting and should be used as a means of checking in on progress throughout the year (Vincent et al., 2015). The major role of the teacher as a leader then becomes the facilitator of community connections that will produce endearing and lasting relationships (Espiner & Hartnett, 2011).

Transition planning takes a team effort that involves a great deal of support and direction. Usually, this team consists of the student, parent, special education teacher, regular education teacher, any service providers, and a member of the school administration (Bateman & Cline, 2016; Wright & Wright, 2009). A good plan should also include community members in a position to provide career guidance and hands-on training (Kallio & Owens, 2012). This planning should include the individual's strengths, areas of interest, and consideration of different types of jobs available for

internships within the community. Also, students should identify what knowledge or skills are necessary for the job or post-secondary education that interests them, as well as learn how to obtain those skills (Kallio & Owens, 2012).

Transition Planning Studies

School-to-Work Barriers as Identified by Special Educators, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and Community Rehabilitation Professionals

The main objective of transitional planning is to provide instruction and interventions necessary for students with intellectual disabilities to acquire the skills needed to gain and preserve employment or to be successful in post-secondary education settings (Riesen et al., 2014). This study used purposeful sampling to select a panel of SPED teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and community rehabilitation providers to participate in a three-round Delphi process questionnaire. Forty-six appropriate participants were identified and were sent the first-round questionnaire via email, of which 36 responded. Subsequently, in round two, 35 responded and in round three, 27 responded.

The Delphi method uses multiple iterations designed to develop a consensus of opinion concerning a specific topic. This method was selected as the appropriate research method because it elicits and refines group judgments to improve the quality of estimates, especially when exact knowledge about an issue is not available. (Riesen et al., 2014 p. 35)

In round one, the participants were asked to list in an unlimited space the number of barriers that limit students with intellectual disabilities face in the transition from school-to-work. In this round, 280 barriers were identified and condensed to 154 that

ranged across 12 specifically identified domains that included: “networking, systemic barriers, student involvement/skills, parent/family involvement, training and education, community integration and access, funding, knowledge of the transition process, transportation, diversity/multicultural issues, and post-secondary education” (Riesen et al., 2014 p. 36).

True to the Delphi process, round two used the 154 identified barriers in the 12 domains and asked participants to rate them on a 4-point Likert scale as to the level of impact: 1 being no impact and 4 being high impact. Round three again contacted participants via email, and this time the standard deviations identified for the 154 barriers in round two were provided. Participants were asked to rerate the barriers based on the information provided (Riesen et al., 2014).

Barriers were eliminated with a rate lower than 3.00. Barriers with a negative shift of 0.50 between round two and three were also eliminated. Items that had a mean score of 3.50 or greater were considered of high impact. Of the 154 barriers identified, sixteen were considered high impact. Of interest to this study were the following high impact barriers:

- (a) increased pressure on secondary teachers to provide instruction that is based on the grade level core standards at the expense of community-based programs and functional skills development, (b) interagency collaboration fails to provide long-term supports for students coming out of SPED programs, and (c) transition planning and interventions for students with intellectual disabilities occur too late. (Riesen et al., 2014, p. 39)

The three highest-rated domains were: (a) lack of student involvement, (b) lack of family involvement, and (c) lack of interagency collaboration. The findings showed that the professionals involved agreed that transition services, as delineated in IDEA 2004, fail to provide students with intellectual disabilities with the necessary skills to obtain and maintain post-school employment (Riesen et al., 2014).

One of the questions asked in this study was, “are school districts providing support for teachers who build instructional programs and supports designed specifically to prepare students for employment, and are vocational rehabilitation and community rehabilitation providers involved in this process?” (Riesen et al., 2014, p. 40). Concerns were also identified as far as how to align instruction with both the core standards and student skills needed for employment, including social skills, self-advocacy skills, and awareness of how to access community resources. Also of concern was the family’s lack of knowledge of available service and unclear outcome expectations (Riesen et al., 2014).

Riesen et al.’s (2014) recommendations focus on the need for collaboration among agencies to improve outcomes for transitioning students with intellectual disabilities, the need for cross-agency training, and the development of interagency agreements. They suggest that for collaboration to be apparent, it must be supported at the administrative level through cross-agency training that is designed to help participants to understand and appreciate each other’s role in the transition process. Coordination and improved relationships between agencies can only improve service for transitioning students with intellectual disabilities (Riesen et al., 2014).

Limitations of the study include the level of responses by participants could be considered opinion and not fact. The sample size of the participants could also be

considered low, as well as their level of expertise in knowledge of training requirements for the other participants in the study. Future research suggestions included looking at this study's application toward specific disabilities as well as including a larger range of professionals in the survey. The most important recommendation was to examine how to effectively train professionals to work as a team in transition planning (Riesen et al., 2014).

Identifying the barriers for students with intellectual disabilities transitioning from school-to-work assisted with focusing my study on collaboration efforts of the transition plan/IEP team. In Riesen et al. (2014) study, interagency collaboration, or the lack of it, was considered a major barrier in providing students with intellectual disabilities with a successful transition into adulthood. Another barrier mentioned is the lack of student participation in the transition plan/IEP meeting. Martin et al. (2006) researched the area of increasing student participation in IEP meetings.

Increasing Student Participation in IEP Meetings: Establishing the Self-Directed IEP as an Evidence-Based Practice

The study by Martin et al. (2006) took place in five school districts and included 764 IEP team members in 130 middle and high schools. Student participants ranged in ages from 12 to over 18. There were 83 male student participants and 47 females. The study was conducted using a pre/posttest control and intervention design. Students were assigned to the two groups randomly through elements of chance, such as the flip of a coin or roll of a die. Sixty-five students were assigned to both the control group and the intervention group.

Students in the intervention group were taught using self-directed IEP instructional material developed by Martin et al. (2006). Observations were carried out

to ensure teachers were teaching the materials as prescribed in the instructional manuals. Through these observations, it was concluded that 98.4% of the instructional material was taught.

Observations of IEP meetings were conducted to determine how often each member of an IEP team spoke during the meetings. A 10-s momentary time sampling was used. Trained observers listened to recordings of meetings and noted at a 10-s beep who on the team was speaking and what they were speaking about. Data was also collected on the length of the IEP meetings, whether or not students were active participants and whether or not students used the instructional steps taught with or without prompting. A post-IEP meeting survey was given to both student and adult participants to gauge their perceptions of (a) prior knowledge, (b) transition issues, (c) participants' meeting behavior, and (d) perceptions of the meeting. This survey consisted of 44 questions represented in the first person, such as "I helped" or "we talked." The answers to questions were rated on a Likert scale.

The results of the study were based on 130 meetings with 26 types of participants that fell into seven role categories. Four types of meetings were identified as annual high school review (69 total, 41 intervention, 28 control), annual middle school review (23 total, 11 control, 12 intervention), middle to high school transition (29 total, 21 intervention, eight control), and high school to career technology center transition (nine total, four intervention, five control). Data were used to identify who started the meetings, SPED teachers, or students. In the intervention group, 37 students started the meeting compared to 56 of the SPED teachers starting the meeting in the control group. This was directly linked to whether or not the meeting was led by a student or a teacher.

In the control group, 95% of the meetings were led by the SPED teacher compared to 82% of SPED teachers leading the intervention group's meetings. It was also determined that students from the control group increased the amount of time they spoke in their IEP meetings over a two-year interval by more than double the amount recorded in the first year. This was the most significant growth of any team member category.

Six major findings were based on assessment data and post-IEP surveys. Observations indicated that students led more IEP meetings and that their talk time significantly increased during these meetings. It was also verified that students engaged in the meetings using the leadership steps that were taught in the intervention group. Students reported in post-meeting surveys that they had a better insight into their IEP meetings. Also, through the post-meeting surveys, both students and adults reported a better understanding of transition issues. Lastly, there was no significant time difference in the teacher-led meetings versus the student-led meetings. Overall, the intervention group reported more student participation in the IEP meetings and more comprehensive transition statements than the control group.

Recommendations from Martin et al. (2006) include training for both students and teachers in the student-led IEP meeting process. They recommend that administrators arrange in-service training for teachers as well as established expectations that facilitate active student involvement in IEP meetings. It is also recommended that teachers instruct students on how to lead their own IEP meeting using leadership skills that include self-determination and self-advocacy skills. Martin et al. (2006) also recommend changes to IDEA that include this type of instruction for students that have annual IEP meetings as early as upper elementary age. Future study recommendations include not only the long-

term effect of the student-led IEP meeting on post-high school outcomes for the student but also the impact on school performance ratings.

This study is relevant to my research because it correlates to the use of best practices in promoting desirable post-high school outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities. The idea of maximizing the potential of students through skills that are directly related to their transition plan/IEP meeting and providing them with life-long self-advocacy skills is something that should be promoted in all aspects of education, not just SPED. It makes me wonder how many school districts actually teach leadership skills to students with intellectual disabilities in an effort to increase participation in the transition plan/IEP meeting.

Best Practices

The following studies suggest the elements that aid in identifying best practices. They emphasize areas including the student's involvement, education/training for all members of the IEP team, the importance of teamwork, and how that might look to individual team members, community involvement, and the actual running of the meeting.

In the SPED field, it has become best practice to promote student involvement in the transition planning process, as emphasized in research since 1990 (Arndt et al., 2006). Seong et al. (2014) state that transition services should be based on students' needs, factoring in students' interests and preferences. Best practices indicate a positive voice by all participants in the transition planning process (Arndt et al., 2006).

Students need to be taught skills to promote self-advocacy and self-determination. A popular process currently being used is the student-led meeting (Martin et al., 2006).

In a study by Hawbaker (2007), it was suggested that one of the single most important things a SPED teacher can do is teach students to lead their own IEP meeting. It promotes learning, confidence, and self-determination. Through this process, students develop self-advocacy skills that will carry them into adult life. A study by Martin and Williams-Diehm (2013) suggests four things need to happen to further promote student-led IEPs.

1. IDEA's next generation needs specific mandates promoting student-led IEP meetings, that include:
 - transition planning begins no later than age 14,
 - transition assessments should be conducted annually,
 - students are taught to understand and participate in transition planning,
 - students are taught to attain their annual goals,
 - transition education concepts are incorporated into the general education curriculum, and
 - academic standards address nonacademic behaviors and experiences associated with post-high school outcomes.
2. Conduct more research focused on student-led meetings and their effects post-high school.
3. Student-led IEP meetings must include student education on how to be an active participant in IEP meetings.
4. Increase the development of instructional materials for teachers to use in teaching students to be more active in IEP meetings.

The skills needed to promote this avenue include choice making, problem-solving, decision making, goal setting, self-advocacy, leadership, and technology use (Arndt et al., 2006).

One study within the Anoka County Transition and Customized Employment (ACTCE) project developed work experiences to meet individuals' interests and strengths (Rogers et al., 2008). The project worked with other agencies to promote self-determination, self-discovery and establishing work experiences based on identified interests, strengths, and abilities of students with disabilities (Rogers et al., 2008). ACTCE was incorporated into the transition plan of individuals still within the secondary education system. One positive influence of the program was a strong community-based approach to transition planning between agencies and other stakeholders. This customized approach to transition planning improved employment rates in this area of Ohio for youths with disabilities (Rogers et al., 2008). The ACTCE study suggests areas of best practices to identify for this study, such as self-determination on the part of the student and community involvement in the transition plan process. According to Rogers et al. (2008), these elements are key predictors of transition planning success and worth recognition in future studies.

Parents should be educated as well. Many parents cite a disproportion of power as a major concern in IEP meetings (Powers et al., 2005). Parents should know not only the rights of the students with disabilities but also the rights of the parents of students with disabilities. Parents should attend meetings willing to listen and prepared to ask questions (Boswell & Stern, 2011). The parents of students with disabilities should also be active participants in the goal-setting process. A willingness to follow through by

helping their child would benefit the student and teachers alike in obtaining goals (Boswell & Stern, 2011).

Teachers can better prepare for transition planning by obtaining the professional development and by attending professional learning community meetings to improve the teacher's role in transition planning (Flannery et al., 2015). The role of the IEP is to obtain positive post-secondary outcomes for the student. Both the teachers and agencies need to work together to align goals and instruction dictated by the transition plan to prepare the student for the best outcomes (Flannery et al., 2015). One way for teachers to develop annual goals that are related to best practices is to utilize the following outline: (a) conduct and review transition-related assessments, (b) write postsecondary goals, (c) identify postsecondary goals, skills, and knowledge, (d) identify student skill and knowledge baseline, (e) conduct a gap analysis, (f) identify state standards, and (g) write triangulated annual goals (Gothberg et al., 2015).

When meeting to plan for transitions, IEP teams should begin with a discussion of the student's post-school vision (Martin et al., 2006). A student must be an active participant in his or her transition plan. Student-led IEPs increase self-awareness and ownership in his or her education process (Johnson et al., 2013). A student's voice is one of the most important elements of an IEP meeting (Boswell & Stern, 2011). Self-advocacy and self-determination should become the focus of transition education for students with intellectual disabilities. To prepare students with disabilities for life after high school, it becomes an important step to teach them the acts of speaking for themselves to control their own affairs and/or making these decisions independently (Martin & Williams-Diehm, 2013). Rather than focusing on academic skills, the primary

goal of SPED should be to teach the necessary skills that will prepare students with intellectual disabilities for their transition from school to community life (Goupil et al., 2002).

Many students with intellectual disabilities' transition plans fail to address nonacademic needs (Gothberg et al., 2015). Educators need to identify these needs and formulate a plan to bridge the gaps between current and needed skill levels and write goals that address these needs (Gothberg et al., 2015). The transition plan should be considered a long-term coordination process that needs to be cultivated with the participation of caregivers, families, students, and school personnel. It should include goals and objectives in life-skills areas in which the student will be expected to function after leaving high school (Gothberg et al., 2015). Parents, too, play an important part in defining that future, yet often feel left out in the transition planning process. They feel too that the school personnel have provided little or no knowledge of resources or services available after high school (Goupil et al., 2002).

Many parents and students experience difficulty transitioning from the stability and security of school programs to an adult service system, including agencies that provide healthcare or mental health services outside of the education system that is unfamiliar and often challenging to access (Powers et al., 2005). One research issue addressed is the lack of participation by stakeholders (Flannery et al., 2015). Issues that contribute to this include parents' lack of awareness of not only the student's rights but the parental rights as well. Communication is a major factor for parents in preparedness for not only transition planning but also for life after high school (Powers et al., 2005).

IEP meetings and transition planning should be the result of the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders (Boswell & Stern, 2011).

Successful collaboration and problem-solving are the cornerstone process on which decisive transition plans are created (Michaels & Ferrara, 2005). Teachers should prepare by making sure the IEP is written in terms that both the parents and students can easily understand (Arndt et al., 2006). Often teachers will write goals that are perceived to be unobtainable because of inadequate supports either in high school or post-high school. Michaels and Ferrara (2005) go on to state there is a great need for teachers to enter into more personal relationships with members of the IEP team to better serve the students with intellectual disabilities and increase the level of collaboration. They stress the importance for stakeholders, the IEP team, “to engage in (a) dialogue, (b) reflection, (c) asking questions, and (d) identifying and clarifying values, beliefs, assumptions and knowledge” (Michaels & Ferrara, 2005, p. 308). This type of collaboration helps all stakeholders and should be an identifiable element of best practices.

Elements of best practices cited by these studies include: (a) teacher leadership, (b) student self-awareness and advocacy, (c) parent knowledge, (d) team commitment and collaboration, and (e) community involvement (Arndt et al., 2006; Boswell & Stern, 2011; Flannery et al., 2015; Gothberg et al., 2015; & Johnson et al., 2013). The awareness of these best practices as identified in the literature aids the current study by providing an area of focus. Based on past research and related best practices identified, this study investigates best practices used in this region of the southern United States. A Critical Theory perspective with qualitative analysis of the data will be used to provide

descriptive and summative documentation of the use of collaboration by IEP team members (Stake, 1995).

Collaboration

Kinsella-Meier and Gala (2016) identify four levels of partnership:

(a) communication, (b) coordination, (c) cooperation, and (d) collaboration. The first three levels are often short-term and brief for the purpose of communicating for a common goal. Collaboration differs greatly in that it is used when communication is interdependent, and the goals are long-term and complex. Responsibilities within the collaboration effort are shared, and long-term relationships are encouraged. Professional and social growth are enhanced through shared values, trust, and understanding of mutual goals. It becomes necessary for members of the collaboration group to support each other and treat each other with mutual respect, creating an equal membership within the team. This ensures free-flowing communication, the sharing of information, shared understanding of goals and purpose, as well as shared responsibility for success (Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016).

Reshaping the Role of a Special Educator into a Collaborative Learning Specialist

Morgan (2016) believes that collaborative teamwork is an emerging necessity for the SPED teacher. This qualitative study focused on the collaborative teamwork needed to ensure quality inclusive teaching. An ethnographic approach to research was utilized. Participants included a principal, general education teachers, SPED teachers, specialists, students, and a university professor of education (Morgan, 2016).

Data collection was based on interviews, researchers' own reflections, and surveys. An online survey tool with open-ended questions was used for teachers, and a

hard copy, paper, and pencil survey of yes, no, or maybe questions were used for students due to their second-grade age level. The goal was to discover the benefits and challenges of collaboration and co-teaching (Morgan, 2016).

The role of the researcher in this study was fully active and participatory. She used her own reflective journal entries and feedback from interviews as data. Precautions were used to monitor assumptions and biases. Triangulation was used to discover themes in the data rather than her own opinions. Common themes in collaboration and co-teaching were identified. Through this process, codes were assigned to each statement in the data collection and then reviewed several times to look for patterns. This process supported the validity and reliability of the findings (Morgan, 2016).

The findings identified five thematic areas: (a) effective collaboration, (b) benefits to collaboration, (c) competing forces, (d) accountability and flexibility, and (e) resources for promoting collaboration and inclusion. Areas identified as effective collaboration included shared responsibility, commitment, shared goals, good communication, integrated services, and quality instruction. The findings also identified competing forces that may hinder collaboration. The areas of concern include time for meetings, trust, and issues of personality or teaching styles. Flexibility and accountability issues included making the time to co-plan. This requires frequent communication and flexibility when regularly dealing with another professional. Accountability is a shared element in this area and needs acceptance from all involved in the collaboration effort. Resources for promoting collaboration are not always face-to-face meetings. Technology can be a useful tool when frequent discussion of collaborative efforts is necessary (Morgan, 2016).

The findings indicate that effective collaboration is challenging but necessary to improve learning outcomes for all. The most cited issue with collaboration is one of time. Collaboration also requires an ability for co-collaborators to be able to work well together, modeling professionalism and social skills for the benefit of students. The researcher also mentions the need for ongoing critical analysis of the collaborative effort to ensure high-quality educational and social benefits result from the effort (Morgan, 2016).

Challenges to collaboration efforts include having common goals, resources, and shared decision-making. The need for professional development that benefits those involved in the collaboration effort is also needed to ensure efforts are directed toward positive results. Another challenging area is the ability to adapt to challenges as they present themselves in the collaboration effort (Morgan, 2016).

Limitations of the study included the researcher falling into preconceived notions of data categories. The researcher also mentions that the use of a university professor as an expert may be a limitation since they are not actively involved in primary education at the classroom level. Another limitation may have been the researcher's active participation in the research process. Her preconceived beliefs about collaboration and its importance in education could have cast a bias on the research (Morgan, 2016).

This study differs in that the focus is on the teachers rather than the student. It is relevant to my study in the respect that my focus will include, but not be limited to, just the teachers. Another study that focuses on the collaborative effort of teachers to improve student achievement is by Al-Saaideh and Al-Zyoud (2015).

Benefits of Teaching Interdisciplinary Subjects Collaboratively in Jordanian Pre-Vocational Education

The purpose of the study was to identify whether collaboration and co-teaching improved middle-school-age students' achievement levels in a pre-vocational education (PVE) setting. Through yearlong experimental teaching using collaborative efforts, the study investigated the benefits and specific effects on students' achievement, skill mastery, and attitudes towards PVE (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

The study consisted of two 7th grade classes with 35 students each. One was used as a control group and the other as a focus group. Five teachers participated in collaborating with the PVE teacher to teach skills within their educational domain. The science teacher participated in teaching agriculture, simple tools, and metal works. The math teacher participated in teaching financial and administrative affairs. The physical education teacher also taught health and safety. The art teacher taught painting, carpentry, and engineering drawing. All teachers had the same level of educational background and had taught for 3 to 6 years (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

In the focus group, teachers worked together before teaching to plan activities and designate the role each teacher was to take in the delivery of materials. The two teachers co-taught the information in both the regular education class and the PVE class as a team. In the control group, the PVE teacher worked alone. A pre-test and post-test were given to students at the beginning of the year and then again at the end of the year (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

Data collection included an attitude scale for students, achievements on written tests, assessment of practical skills, and interviews with teachers. Most important to this

researcher are the findings from the teacher interviews about collaborative efforts. This data was analyzed qualitatively (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

The benefits of collaborative efforts from teachers in the PVE delivery were multiple. Teachers mentioned that this effort provided students with higher motivation and more enthusiasm toward the content. Teachers reported that students often meet PVE classes with negative attitudes but, when taught through academic courses, were much more receptive. Collaborative co-teaching with the focus group rendered high achievement scores for students than did the PVE teacher only taught course. Students' mastery of skills was indicative of the differentiated instruction offered through the team-teaching effort as well. Teacher interviews cooperated with the findings and substantiated what the statistical data represented (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

The authors, in their conclusion, state that co-teaching is an administrative choice that has immense benefits regardless of the educational setting it is utilized in, including regular education, SPED, and post-secondary education. They also mention that the collaborative co-teaching efforts may be of special interest to administrators, teachers, and curriculum developers (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

In conclusion, the authors recommend that collaborative teaching needs the following to promote its benefits: (a) short term school system changes that promote collaborative teaching, (b) use collaboration as an instructional methodology, (c) use collaboration to teach cross-curricular skills, (d) continually assess collaboration to address challenges and results, and (e) improve communication between teachers through the collaborative efforts (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015).

Together these studies (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015; Gould, 2015; Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016; Morgan, 2016; and Phillips, 2015) have assisted me to see the importance of collaboration in the classroom as well as in the transition plan/IEP meeting for students with intellectual disabilities. The focus of collaboration efforts in my study will be enhanced by the knowledge gained in these studies.

Chapter Summary

Without adequate job opportunities and training, every year, tens of thousands of young people with disabilities enter the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) programs and never leave. Youths with disabilities are leaving high school without a job or post-secondary education goals, face living in extreme poverty (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). They are permanently dependent on family for shelter and support (Andersson et al., 2000). However, youths with adequate transition planning are less likely to become SSDI dependent. It has been greatly suggested that the key to success is dependent on proper transition planning that incorporates a concentration of study in the field indicated through the planning, whether it is college or vocational training (Swanson, 2008). Haring and Tomlin's (1999) research suggests that the purpose of transition planning is to allow youths with disabilities to become productive and independent citizens. For this planning to be successful, they also suggest that transition advocates, the student, their parents, teachers, and any necessary outside agencies need to be involved at the high school level. For youths with disabilities to succeed in the workforce or college, there must be a link between curriculum content and the quality of transition services provided (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). This success relies on the preparation of identified academic skills

needed for a specific occupation or post-secondary field of study and necessary social skills instruction for both community living and the workforce (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). These necessary elements of transition for students with intellectual disabilities can best be achieved through the collaborative efforts of the IEP/transition team members (Al-Saaideh & Al-Zyoud, 2015; Gould, 2015; Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016; Morgan, 2016; Phillips, 2015). The importance of transition planning in high school for students with intellectual disabilities continues to be an issue that can be remedied through best practices in transition planning (Arndt et al., 2006). See Appendix C and Appendix D for details related to search categories and keywords.

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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify how members of the transition planning team viewed collaborative efforts during the IEP meeting as well as the development of the transition plan and determine what administration can do to help promote a greater effort of collaboration for high school students with intellectual disabilities. Participant observations, reflections, and interviews were used to identify the perceptions of how team members collaborate. This study was a qualitative, observational case study with a critical theory lens. Using the data obtained from these observations, reflections, and interviews, a comparison of team members' perception of collaboration, with information gained in the literature review, helped to identify efforts in transition planning collaboration by IEP team members for high school students with intellectual disabilities.

Methods

This study was a qualitative observational case study with a critical theory framework. Critical theory is based on the desire to know how the world works and how that knowledge can help improve it. A former belief of critical theory was to affect solutions to problems to make life in the situation better for the disaffected population (Freire, 2014). It is a form of social research that began in 1923, which is

believed to be an interdisciplinary form of research believing in studying how individual experiences are affected by all human experiences and how that can expose problems as well as potential. It identifies already existing ways of life and identifies the potentials of what could be ahead. This form of research allows the focus to be on what is happening at the moment instead of being based on what has happened in the past (Bronner, 2011), denoting that each case study is unique and has a unique and specific meaning to lend to understanding. The purpose of critical theory is to find commonalities within the human experiences of the case studied (Tyson, 2015). Within Education, critical theory can bring structure to identifying underlying meaning and help formulate understanding in a naturally progressive way (Sim & Von Loon, 2012).

The lens of critical theory and its reflective tendencies forms a natural progression to the educational process study of transition planning. This allowed me to test and refine theory within the realm of qualitative analysis (Patton, 2015). The critical theory lens of qualitative research is understanding that there is a complexity to consider that goes beyond identifying intricacies within the research and that the meanings and roles of data gained always have a complex interaction (Ravitch & Mittenfelner, 2016). Stake (1995) suggests that qualitative studies are developed from a sincere interest in learning the function of an event. Observational case studies were ideal for my study because it uses data gathering techniques from observations, reflections, and interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest that the focus of this type of study is usually concentrated on an organization, a particular group within the organization, or a particular activity. The focus of my study was similar in that it involves the activity of a transition plan/IEP, the group of team members needed for this activity, and was located

within the organization of a high school. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) also state that this type of research usually focuses on a distinct part of the whole organization. The people within this group are known to interact and usually identify with each other. This, too, was identifiable with the study of the collaborative efforts of the transition plan/IEP team for high school students with intellectual disabilities. Observations, reflections, and interviews from this case were compared using triangulation and aided in identifying efforts of collaboration used in the transition/IEP team being studied.

With this in mind, qualitative research epitomizes data driven-research. Strategies for gaining understanding are adapted to meet the challenges faced (Patton, 2015). Through observations of transition planning and IEP meetings, along with participant interviews, data started to emerge that identified the collaboration efforts of team members. As the research continued, questions emerged, as well as answers to better increase understandings.

Participants

Participants in this study included the parent of a high school student with intellectual disabilities, a SPED teacher, an ODR, and participating agencies involved in the transition planning process. To acquire participants, purposeful sampling was used (Lodico et al., 2010). In purposeful sampling, participants are chosen so that expansion of the purpose for the study can develop in a detailed productive manner (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and in a way from which the most can be learned (Merriam, 2009).

Permission was first granted by the school district superintendent. The district that was used was chosen due to proximity. With district permission granted, Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission was then approved. Once IRB permission

was granted, the superintendent was asked to recommend a high school within the district. That high school's principal was then asked to recommend participants for the study based on student selection criteria. Identified potential participants/parents had already been contacted to attend a new program announcement meeting. A sample of the Consent Form is included in Appendix H. All that voluntarily accept were included in the study as individual cases.

Students selected for this study were in the transition plan process of their high school years. Mitigating factors include: (a) an age range of 14 to 18 years of age, (b) have completed a Transition Plan Survey, (c) identified a transition field of study, and (d) have at least two annual transition plan/IEP meetings left in their high school careers. The purpose of this study was not to expose the individual weaknesses of team members but rather to improve the collaborative efforts of all team members. The ultimate goal was to best prepare students for a successful future.

Everyone else in the study was linked by their association with this student's IEP/transition team. On each team, there should be a SPED teacher that is deemed the IEP holder, which is responsible for initiating the transition plan process and notifying all team members of meetings. A regular education teacher is also on the team. His/her role is to ensure that accommodations and criteria from the IEP/transition team are included for the student in the regular education or inclusion setting. Outside agencies that provide services for the student that are not provided at school can be invited to the team meetings when granted access permission by the parents. The ODR is often a member of the school administrative team, and their presence is required at all team meetings. They are the official district and state representatives for SPED meetings. Also included at

these transition plan/IEP meetings is the district's Vocation Department director, or VOTAC, for this specific school. This person attends all transition plan meetings in the school district that address vocational training needs for the student.

Procedures

The procedures for this research began when (IRB) permission was granted. Because participants were sought through purposeful random sampling, contact with the superintendent of the district was a necessary step. When permission was granted by the superintendent, I then began contacting the principal of the recommended site. The principal then recommended participants be invited to the study. All potential participants that willingly volunteer was studied. Contact was through and already scheduled school site meeting for parents of high school students to discuss a new district vocational training program. At that meeting, parental consent was obtained. All participants received information identifying the researcher, the reason for the study, and requesting permission for the participation necessary in the study (See Appendix F and Appendix G).

Everyone involved was assured of anonymity by name, by the school, and by the district. As a SPED teacher, I am aware of and bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA, which protects the privacy of students and parents in special educational settings. Confidentiality was maintained by me. Measures were taken to provide anonymity for all participants. The team used was designated as Team1. Individuals within that team will only be identified as their relationship to the team (i.e., parent, SPED teacher, regular education teacher, etc.). If more than one person of a designated title is in attendance, they were given a number, such as parent1 and parent2.

A likely identification for a parent of Team1 would be P1, and a SPED teacher would be SPED1. No personal/identifiable student or individual information, such as age, race, gender, or exceptionality, is relevant to this study. Data collection will be through observational notes, recorded interviews, and reflective journals. All data collected will be kept in the strictest confidence and secured by the researcher. No persons or agencies will have access to unpublished information at any time, for any reason, whether it relates to that agency or future research. Participants were assured that they could request to leave the study at any time. All instruments used in this study will be maintained digitally under lock and key. All participants will be provided with the final results of the study upon request.

Once permission to conduct research was given, the first objective was to identify all persons associated with the student's IEP. This identified all participants and also identified if the student already has a transition plan in place. This also identified the date for the next transition plan/IEP meeting. I used this information to redefine questions and begin to categorize elements of collaboration that are evident (Stake, 1995). The already scheduled group meeting was used as the first observation since a participant volunteered at that meeting. When the observation takes place first, the data gathered was unbiased by the interview process that followed. During this meeting, I was able to generate a list of categories to check off the elements of collaboration viewed by individual members of the team. For example, I noted who is talking and what influence they have toward collaboration and noted whether their influence was positive or negative toward the effort. When the transition plan/IEP meeting is concluded, I

requested a reflective summary and began arranging meetings to interview participants.

The questions included but were not limited to the following:

1. What are the collaborative efforts exhibited in the transition planning process?
2. What are the challenges to collaboration in the transition planning process?
3. What are the perceptions of collaboration by the transition planning team?

As Stake (1995) suggests, with each interview, data emerged that required redefining of questions. Procedures for the interviews began with arranging the meeting time and place with the identified team members. I used an audio recording app that can transcribe, to record the conversation so that I could review it for any clarification I needed afterward.

During the interviews, I took field notes on a self-generated form that identifies the following: (a) subject; (b) years of experience, where applicable, and relationship to the student; (c) area to describe the setting; and (d) area to comment on issues that will need to be further investigated through either the transcript of the recording or through the refinement of the study questions (Stake, 1995). I also included a space on this document for an immediate reflection once the interview was concluded. Allowing myself this time to reflect on the interview allowed me to study the uniqueness of not just the individual but of their relationship to the case and identify issues more clearly. By using this time to reflect, I knew if questions for the next interview would need to be changed based on the direction identified in field notes.

Through field notes and transcripts of the interviews, I began to look at the varying categories that have emerged as they pertain to collaborative efforts by the team members. Through analysis of this coded data and descriptive analysis of the interviews,

a comparison of gathered data to what the literature suggests is best practices of a collaborative effort helped guide analysis through coding and triangulation of these areas of interest, which include: (a) communication, (b) cooperation, (c) coordination, and (d) collaboration (Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016). I used triangulation to make sense of the relationships within the teams. Stake (1995) states that the qualitative researcher should use this approach to gain meaning and direct interpretation of the data. This analysis was then used to create assertions about the efforts of collaboration in this study. Once the analysis was completed, a descriptive and thorough write-up of the findings was made for Chapter 4. I used these findings to draw conclusions and make suggestions for future studies in Chapter 5.

Instruments and Measures

The transcripts of interviews and observations of the transition plan and IEP meetings aided in identifying areas that either coincide with or contrast with identifiable collaboration efforts of team members. Instruments used in this area of the study included forms designed to aid the identification of categories within the study (Stake, 1995). The measure taken with this information was methodological triangulation from the data sources (Stake, 1995). Through this type of measure, I was able to generalize similarities and differences among the team members on collaborative efforts.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was to be an objective observer. Stake (1995) asserts that the role of the researcher should encompass six important roles: (a) inform and teach a new sense of competence, (b) advocate, (c) elevate by searching for merit as well as

shortcomings, (c) biographer of people and events, (c) interpreter of data by pulling new meaning from mundane experiences, and (d) construct knowledge rather than just discover it.

However, it was necessary to employ a sense of shared experiences with the participants to gain trust and unfiltered participation. Sharing past experiences provided the necessary level of trust needed to initiate this case-study. Ravitch and Mittenfelner (2016) consider it wise to remember that the social identity of the researcher will factor into the research. The fact that I am a SPED teacher provided me with a common interest to initiate relationships with the teachers involved in the IEP team. It was necessary to maintain a balance of objectivity and sensitivity to ensure confidence in the findings as reasonable (Patton, 2015). This objectivity challenged me as I coded and triangulated the data to ensure fidelity and validity in the findings. My role then lent itself to act as the translator and mediator in the realms of the theoretical, the conceptual, and the methodological (Ravitch & Mittenfelner, 2016). According to Stake (1995), my role was to understand the case. This research helped recognize an understanding of the collaborative role of each member of the IEP/transition team.

Data Collection and Analysis

Observations, reflections, and interviews from this case were compared to each other and aided in identifying efforts of collaboration used in transition planning by all participants. These data allowed me to then study and code as prescribed by emerging themes. This coding helped me to identify issues within the data, such as factors that appear within the team that affected collaborative efforts and factors from outside of the group that affected collaborative efforts (Stake, 1995). Within the data, the collaboration

was noted as Theta, and areas of concern regarding Theta were noted as Iota. According to Stake (1995), Theta is a symbol used to represent what is being studied, in this instance, the collaborative efforts of a transition planning team. Theta and Iota are of the utmost importance in any case study. Theta is the dominating factor of the case study, and Iota represents the issue(s) that are derived from the personal context of those involved and draw out and recognize the prevalent problems faced in human interaction within the context of the case study (Stake, 1995). The findings for Iota were then triangulated to identify collaborative efforts by the team members. An example would be participants' perceived understandings of collaboration. Does each participant view collaboration with the same definition? Do all participants feel they have an equal voice in the collaborative effort? The data aided in determining the participants' perceived levels of collaboration efforts applied to the transition planning process. Assertions were made about the collaborative efforts of team members in this case study.

Gould (2015) states that the goal should be to make good teachers better, and through his research, he identifies collaboration as a key element in promoting teacher improvement. This type of collaboration is relevant to the students with intellectual disabilities because it is associated with the need for regular education teachers and SPED teachers to collectively take responsibility for student achievement. It also requires a commitment from the administration to organize and plan staff development that is specific and easily put into practice, thus allowing for the continued improvement in the collaborative effort (Gould, 2015). Through my study, I observed the collaborative efforts of teachers, parents, outside agencies, and administration through one student's IEP/transition meetings. I sought out elements of collaboration, cooperation, and

commitment that build relationships between team members that helped promote student achievement (Phillips, 2015). Through the process of observations, data analysis, and participant reflection, I utilized Servant/Transformational Leadership to show all participants the importance of their role in the IEP transition plan process.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

Research began with IRB approval in February of 2020. My topic of “How Are the Collaborative Efforts of the Transition/IEP Team Viewed by Its Members” was the focus using an observational case study method. With approval in hand, I contacted a school district in northwest Louisiana for permission to perform research at an area high school. Once that permission was granted, I contacted the principal of a particular high school and arranged a meeting to discuss my ideas for research. The principal was very open and forthcoming about having the focus of research at this school. I was asked to come back in a few weeks to discuss it with the administration team. At this second school site meeting, I was invited to a parent meeting that would take place the following week to introduce parents of Moderately Mentally Disabled (MOD) students to a state agency that provides job training and job placement opportunities. In this meeting, I was able to address the group about my research and received one participant.

Meeting 1

This meeting took place on March 12, 2020, in a classroom on the school campus. The classroom was not in use currently and was bare. The only things on the walls were the required school motto, discipline reminders, and other such things. When the meeting

started parents, who were all on time, came in and sat with their students. This particular school does not require students to wear uniforms, so the students, as well as parents, were dressed casually, mostly wearing jeans. Everyone else was dressed in business attire, including myself. The meeting started on time with everyone present, except for the person from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). The special education teacher greeted every student and parent by name as they entered the room, creating an atmosphere of welcoming and trust.

The focus of the meeting was to introduce parents to the services provided by LRS, a state ran the agency that provides job training and job opportunities to Louisiana citizens with disabilities. There were nine parents, including Parent 1 (P1) participants, and 13 students present. The students without parent representation were over the age of consent and did not require a parent present to attend. All of the parents in attendance were the mothers of students present. The SPED teacher (SPED1) for this group of students was present and acted as the host of the meeting. The instructional specialist (IS1) was present and in authority with the district and the school to act as the ODR for this meeting. There were two representatives from the district's vocational program (VOTAC1 and VOTAC2) that spoke to the parents about a new program, work skills training program, that would allow their students to gain job skills training at school and apply that training in a workplace environment while still in school. The hope is that students will use this skill training to get a job and have a productive adult life. A representative from a local community college (LCC1) was also in attendance to discuss with parents their partnership with LRS in providing certain necessary basic skills to students to prepare them for the workforce. A representative from LRS (LRS1) came as

well to speak to parents about the process and have them begin the paperwork necessary to enter this program.

This meeting was considered an official amended transition/IEP meeting for each student in attendance. Thus, the team for the acquired participant at this meeting included SPED1, IS1, VOTAC1, VOTAC2, LCC1, LRS1, student, and P1. The student is not addressed in any fashion in this research. The demographics for this student do not affect the research in any way, and the student's level of participation is not taken into account. Also, there was not a member of the school's administrative team in attendance at this meeting. For the sake of this research, the following people were considered team participants and a part of the research method: (a) SPED1, (b) IS1, (c) VOTAC1, (d) LCC1, (e) LRS1, and (f) P1.

As outlined in methodology in Chapter 3, my position in this meeting was not to interact with any of the team members but to observe their interactions. This meeting was designed to facilitate the introduction of this group of students and parents to the LRS agent and the services that could be provided and/or initiated for job skills training. LRS1 was late for the meeting. SPED1, VOTAC1, and VOTAC2 provided as much information to parents during this time as possible in an effort to keep them engaged until LRS1 arrived.

Parents had a few questions, such as:

1. If my student gets a job with a paycheck, with this affect their monthly benefits check that they already receive?
2. Will my student have someone go with them to the worksite?
3. When will they start work?

They would ask these questions quietly to SPED1, as she was the person they were most familiar with due to her position as the IEP holder. These were answered with the best information available at the moment. The VOTAC personnel from the district seemed to be very knowledgeable about this process and willingly fielded questions. One parent even voiced that he/she did not want his/her student to participate in this program if it meant losing benefits money already received on his/her behalf. Again, VOTAC tried to alleviate any fears and asked the parents to hold that question until LRS1 arrived. VOTAC1 even went as far as to say, “look, I have been in your position.” I have been where you are sitting right now. My youngest son is Autistic, so I have been on both sides of the table in these meetings. At that point, SPED1 mentions that she too has an Autistic son and understands how the parents feel. At one point in the meeting, both VOTAC1 and SPED1 discussed the importance of opening up a joint checking account with their disabled sons. By making the account a joint account, they were able to keep an eye on their sons’ spending and quickly resolve any problems that needed to be addressed. The teacher also shared some of the training already in place in the classroom, such as the token economy, where students are paid every two weeks and have to keep track of income and expenditures. They have a calendar and have to learn to budget for things outside of the norm, such as buying a friend a birthday gift or going to a public event. It was evident that they were trying to alleviate parental fears by commiserating with them.

The LCC1 was introduced and was able to speak about the skills they teach students through the community college setting. These skills include self-advocacy, personal speaking skills, and opening a bank account. One parent had to leave to go back

to work before the meeting was concluded. The LRS1 representative did not show up on time for the meeting and did not speak long before the meeting concluded. For greater detail, review the participation graph in Appendix L. During the meeting, IS1 was busy documenting the participants on each IEP. The IS1 did not participate in the transition/IEP meeting verbally.

At the end of the meeting, I was introduced to the parents that were still present and asked to explain my research. I introduced myself, stating who I am and that I am a SPED teacher within the district. I explained how the principal had generously allowed me to conduct my research at this school and that I too had an Autistic son and understood the process of IEPs from both the educator's position and from a parent's.

It is important to note that the next day, March 13, 2020, the governor of Louisiana, John Bel Edwards, issued an executive order that among other actions immediately halted any gathering of more than 250 people and closed all K-12 public schools statewide (Office of Governor, 2020). Through electronic communication, I was able to conduct my research with individuals through email, virtual conference meetings, or phone calls.

From my observation, in this meeting, Thetas and Iotas were derived from a transcript of the meeting. Thetas were noted as the number of times team members interacted in a collaborative effort with each other during a nearly one-hour meeting. At this meeting, parents asked questions or spoke about the information eleven times, and SPED1 addressed information presented or fielded questions fourteen times. IS1 spoke once when introduced; VOTAC1 and VOTAC2 spoke a combined 25 times and

dominated the time frame of this meeting. LCC1 spoke five times, and LRS1 spoke four times.

The Iotas identified were based on the comments of the participants and their levels of interaction. There was a lot of information given repeatedly to the parents about what students could do as far as vocational services and training. I was surprised when I went through the recording of this meeting at how many times parents actually spoke up and asked questions. I did not remember it being that many times. Usually, they asked quietly the SPED1, the person with whom they are most familiar, and SPED1 would relay those questions to the group for clarification. Most of the students receive a disabilities benefit check monthly, and parents were greatly concerned about how working would change their status within the benefits system. Students were present in the meeting but did not seem to participate, and this could be due to their exceptionality of MOD. The VOTAC1 and VOTAC2 representatives seemed to dominate the meeting and often spoke over others to provide information. LCC1 provided a lot of information for parents about the skill development program offered at this institution and that services are linked to LRS and the school. These skills include what was referred to as “soft skills training.” These skills can include but are not limited to workplace attitude, flexibility, manners, communication skills, and problem-solving (Bartel, 2018). The SPED teacher’s inability to find worksites willing to allow on-site job training for this group of students is very concerning. Only four local businesses were mentioned that are participating in this process at other schools in the area. They were a local pizza restaurant, a chain restaurant, a dog grooming service, and a lawn care business. When LRS1 arrived at the meeting, it was mostly to repeat information that had already been

started and to have parents fill out the necessary forms to enroll their students in this program before graduation. It seems that most people in this situation wait until after graduation, and the process takes longer because of that.

Individual Summaries and Interviews 1

After the meeting, I contacted each team member (P1, SPED1, IS1, VOTAC1, LCC1, and LRS1) via email and asked them to write a summary of how they thought this meeting went. All participants responded except LRS1. Multiple attempts to reach this person were met with no response. I used team members' summaries as the catalyst to determine questions to ask during individual interviews. Those that responded were very forthcoming about issues they see with the overall collaborative efforts of the team.

Parent1

Parent1 is a nurse in a local hospital and the parent of a MOD high school junior. She stated in her summary that the information in the meeting was good but not very well organized. It was disappointing to hear that students were introduced to the idea of getting a job, but then the pandemic required mandatory quarantine for everyone, leaving her student wondering how long it will take before a job can be acquired. She was also disappointed that even before the shutdown, there were no timeframes available for this training to begin. She felt it was unfair to present this information without timeframes and job skill work site availability already in place.

I interviewed Parent1 after the summary was submitted. Questions for the interview were derived from the most common thread of her summary, which focused on vocational skills and job opportunities. Questions include:

1. Do you feel like you and your student get enough information and understanding about transition services/vocational services?
2. Are there ever any outside/vocational providers at your student's annual IEP?
3. Do you feel like one meeting a year is enough to keep you informed about vocational training/services that your student is eligible for?
4. What at this moment would be the most helpful for you in understanding these services and the process for getting them?
5. Is there anything you might do differently at your student's next IEP meeting?

The discussion we had from these questions was very informative.

Although Parent1 is a nurse and considers herself to be well educated, she feels as if she is not informed enough in the services that are out there to provide for her student's future. She has two daughters that often go to IEP meetings with her, one of which is a teacher in a neighboring state. P1 often draws on her knowledge and experiences to be more informed at the meetings. She also stated that, unlike herself, parents of MOD students are often not educated beyond high school and will come to her for advice. They see her as someone they can trust to tell them the truth. However, in the area of vocational services and training for MOD students, she feels grossly unqualified and/or uneducated. She would like to see someone talk to MOD students individually to explain to them and their parents what can be done for their future and when services can start. According to P1, what she and other parents most need is someone that can help them understand the services available and help them through the process of acquiring them, somewhat like a personal advocate knowledgeable about the process and bureaucracy in finding job skills training, as well as jobs, for MOD students beyond high school. Her

biggest concern is feeling like once her student completes high school, he/she will be left to fend for himself/herself without any knowledge of where to start or who to talk to about it. She believes the process presented at the meeting should have begun sooner in her student's academic career.

SPED1

The meeting summary from SPED1 was delayed due to school closures that happened the day after the meeting. SPED1 reported that the struggle of online classes for MOD students was a bit overwhelming and delayed her comments. She had three points of interest about the meeting that were fascinating. The first being the number of parents that attended the meeting. She stated that it was the first time she had even met some of the parents in attendance, as they do not usually attend their students' annual IEP meetings. Her second concern was that this meeting came across as a big sales pitch and that knowing how much this program means to the parents, everyone must follow through. She stated that the presentation left her with questions, and she was sure many parents still had questions as well. Lastly, she was glad that parents and students were being signed up for LRS and having the opportunity to establish that relationship sooner rather than later on behalf of students. Again, SPED1 felt as if this meeting was a step in the right direction for all that participated. In the interview, more enlightening information was forthcoming about team participation.

For the interview, I generated questions based on SPED1's summary of Meeting 1. The questions asked included:

1. Is getting parents involved in the IEP process a big problem?

2. Do you think the lack of participation is due to a feeling of being outnumbered by school-based team members?
3. Do you think this new program, this new initiative, will help students more than in the past? And do you think it will get the parents more involved?
4. How does the VOTAC team promote work for these students?
5. How do you think the transition team can work together to try to improve outcomes for these students? And are they doing all that they can?
6. Do you feel like parents will do everything required for LRS to get job training and job opportunities for their students?
7. What do you think we can do to get parents more involved in the transition/IEP team?

The interview with SPED1 was conducted via an online video conference at a time convenient for us both. SPED1 has taught special education students in both middle school and high school for the same school district. In middle school, she taught resource SPED English language arts, and in high school, she has taught self-contained MOD students. During her summary of Meeting 1, she mentioned that getting parents to attend meetings is often an issue and was surprised by the turnout at Meeting 1. When asked about parent attendance, she stated that parents often feel intimidated by the number of school-based personnel in attendance and also because they do not know or understand what services their students receive at the school site. Not only that, but frequently parents are frustrated with the SPED system and are angry at what they have gone through to have their students in SPED. She mentioned that parents' anger could stem from a lack of knowledge of the SPED system and to what school system services are

their students are entitled. She goes on to state that this lack of knowledge is not necessarily due to a parent's level of education in general but just uninformed specifically about SPED and services available to his/her student. She also mentioned that this lack of knowledge extends beyond high school to the availability of services they should have access to them as well.

SPED1 sees not only a lack of knowledge from parents but from the community. She feels that the community, in general, wants to help MOD students find job skills training and job placement but is unaware of how to participate due to a lack of outreach. SPED1 does not feel that they will come to the schools and say, "Hey, we want to help." The schools/districts need to reach out to them directly to get more participation. She feels that there is a disconnect in the system here to reach members of the community that are willing to participate, and there seems to be a disconnect about who should reach out to them as well. The biggest lack of participation, though, is still centered on the parents. SPED1 sees parent participation at this level to be of the utmost importance. She reiterates this by saying that even though she feels she knows her students, there are things parents know about their students that she does not know. The combined knowledge of team members working together can only help find the services and programs that will most benefit the student's future. When asked what could be done to encourage parents or community members, she said she wished there was a process for them to come learn about the transition/IEP process without any pressure and that this would be a great introduction when students are first placed in SPED. The focus of placement for students in SPED should be to educate the parents about their rights, the services that are provided, and what the parent needs to do to ensure his/her student is

successful after high school. SPED1 believes that educating parents about SPED can lead to better involvement in the process and better participation as a member of the IEP team.

IS1

Team member IS1 is a former special education teacher in the district. He has been working as a SPED team facilitator for several years and is well respected in this field. His position is to act as the ODR in the absence of an administrative team member and to finalize with the state all IEPs within his caseload. His part in Meeting 1 was not typical because it was not a typical transition/IEP meeting. During the meeting, he made sure that all students' IEPs were documented and signed by those in attendance. His summary of the meeting was briefly based on his involvement. Like SPED1, IS1 was impressed by the number of parents that attended the meeting, and like Parent 1, he was concerned about the disorganization of the meeting. He stated that he is excited about the opportunities presented to students to further expedite their future.

Based on this summary, I formulated several questions for IS1. Questions to be used in the interview included:

1. Your part in this meeting was not vocalized. Is this usual?
2. How much greater is your usual participation?
3. How do you perceive the collaboration efforts of all team members?
4. Do you think this new transition initiative will improve the collaboration of the team?

The interview was conducted via an online video conference. The interview with IS1 was conducted via an online video conference at a time that was mutually acceptable.

His perception of the meeting was that it was chaotic. He did not anticipate the level of parent participation and what all would have to be documented on each IEP of those present. He stated that his level of participation that day was not typical. The expectation of that meeting was not as it had been planned due to time restraints of LCC1 and LRS1. He thought that the parents, whom he says he had met in the past, were understanding of his lack of participation on that day. He, too, was surprised at the parent turnout that day. He stated that several of the parents in attendance had already voiced disappointment with the transition/IEP process and were just going to take their chances once their student was out of school. He mentioned another area program for MOD students after they leave high school that is housed at a local college. Students can attend this program for an additional two years for continued education opportunities at their ability levels. When asked about individual team members' levels of participation in these meetings, he stated that at the first transition meeting, when a student is moving from middle school to high school, participation by all team members is usually high. However, as a student progresses through high school and prepares to leave, participation levels decrease drastically. He also mentioned that the level of parent participation is low because they do not fully understand the purpose of the meetings. Parents often think that transition meetings mean the student will be moving to a different school, not that they are trying to determine how to prepare them for adulthood. IS1 says that when parents ask questions, it is usually for basic things like "What is that for?" He also stated that most of the time, the problem in a transition meeting is that the student will change their mind about their job interests, which changes the whole direction for planned services. He does believe that the new initiative with LRS and LCC will improve

transition services for students and better prepare them for adulthood, which will, in general, improve the transition meetings. Just like SPED1 mentioned, IS1 mentioned that the community wants to be involved but is not educated on the steps necessary to train MOD students in the workplace. IS1 did mention that in the future, when students and parents are introduced to such programs and new services, it would be prudent to meet with parents individually to get their input as well as field questions they would not ask in a large group setting.

VOTAC1

The VOTAC1 representative is a certified SPED teacher and has a background with state and federal agencies that supply work opportunities as a transition facilitator before coming to her present job. She has been with the VOTAC team for this district for several years, and it is her job to support teachers in the MOD curriculum and in the high schools for transitions post-high school.

In her summary, VOTAC1 stated that this meeting represented a common goal of all team members wanting to prepare MOD students for employment and independent living post-high school. She felt as though the level of participation was extremely high based on the fact that eight out of the nine parents present agreed to sign up their students for the program.

The questions generated from this summary included:

1. Do you regularly see this level of participation from parents and outside the school agencies?
2. Are these outside agencies a part of the annual IEP for students participating in the programs like this?

3. Why is it up to the teacher to find job training for students?

We met in an unused classroom at a mutually agreed up on-site and spoke face to face, wearing masks and meeting the social distancing guidelines.

She stated that the major problem with transitioning students from high school to work in this area is a lack of resources. In her experience, meetings like this one always generate a lot of participation from parents. For the most part, parents are eager to find out what avenues are available for their students after high school, so this usually generates high attendance. Often though, in the transition/IEP meetings, parents are overwhelmed with the amount of information being presented to them. Sometimes too, they are afraid that if their students get jobs, they will lose the benefits they are already receiving. She suggested having a fair job type of meeting, at least annually, for students with transition/IEPs so that they and their parents can get some idea of what is out there for them. It is important to not just throw information their way but to provide them with a visual and tangible idea of what opportunities are out there for them to be a part of after high school. She stated that the main concern for the team is active engagement, asserting that there should be more than just one meeting a year. Parents, in her opinion, are the least active members of the team. An idea to get them more involved was to have testimonials from parents and former students that are actively living and working in the community. Also, that there should be more information presented in a more user-friendly manner. Often for parents of students that have been in the school system for 15 to 16 years, they are tired of the system, the process, and the annual meetings. They need a place they can go to get information, one-on-one, that specifically addresses the exact needs of their students after high school. Parents need to know that there is a welcoming

person or place to provide the necessary information, but where they will not be lectured to about their students' disabilities/inabilities. Unfortunately, most parents do not understand the system comprehensively. This is why parents need to be informed about what kind of help can be secured from various agencies and vendors.

LCC1

As a vendor invited to this meeting, LCC1 was there to present information about services her agency provides to help MOD students prepare to get employment. She is not originally from the area and has worked out of state in the capacity of finding vendors for student worksite experiences. Her summary of the meeting was positive about the variety of people represented in this meeting and the roles each play in the transition/IEP process.

In that summary, LCC1 discussed the level of participation from all involved with this process. She specifically mentioned the level of parents in attendance in the middle of a workday. She attributed that to the dedication of SPED1 and how she must have cultivated relationships with the parents of her students. LCC1 also mentioned that VOTAC1 and VOTAC2 were there as a team acting in an administrative capacity. She mentions too that vendors such as herself and LRS were there to represent post-high school options available to MOD students and their families. Having completed a summary of the event, LCC1 was eager to discuss the event with me. The interview took place via a phone conference.

During the interview with LCC1, she discussed many of the issues associated with this demographic of students and the lack of involvement necessary for success. She mentioned the way vendors are acquired and how the community does not know how

to get involved. Her organization is considered a vendor to LRS and gets paid for each job they can create on behalf of MOD students. However, the cost of finding the job, training the student, and checking up on the placement often results in a zero balance. She also discussed the need to educate parents about their rights, the availability of services, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. She is very passionate about her job and the services they can provide for people that are aware.

Meeting 1 Iotas

After the meeting, the summaries, and the interviews were completed, several Iotas began to emerge (See transcripts and Iota triangulation charts). It became apparent that parents of MOD students often lack the information necessary to adequately manage their students' education to maximize post-high school outcomes. It is also clear that the community would like to be involved in the process of training and hiring MOD students. Like parents, the community as a whole lacks the necessary knowledge to participate in existing programs. The collaborative efforts of the transition/IEP are viewed by most of the participants as one-sided, and the parents are often just there to sign the papers without any consideration to other options due to a lack of knowledge.

Meeting 2

Meeting 2, for the student that is now a senior in high school, was scheduled as an annual transition/IEP meeting in November 2020. Participants were notified of the meeting in advance. I contacted SPED1 as a reminder that I had consent to attend from P1. SPED1 informed me of the meeting date and code to attend virtually. I arrived at the virtual room on time and was not admitted. I called SPED1, and she responded that the meeting was over. The time had been changed on request of P1 due to work. The

meeting took place earlier that morning, with only SPED1, P1, and the Adaptive Physical Education (APE) teacher present. I was told that the meeting only lasted 15 minutes. I asked if the other members of the team had been notified of the schedule change and were told that it was placed on the virtual calendar for the district and that everyone should have gotten a notification. No other team members from Meeting 1 were present.

P1 – 2

After the meeting, I contacted P1 and asked for a summary of the experience in Meeting 2. She informed me that she thought the meeting went well. There was a discussion of plans for post-high school. It was important to her that she was made to feel that she was not alone in planning for the student's future.

I was able to formulate a few questions based on this summary. The questions asked included:

1. What type of future plans did you discuss?
2. What type of transition programs did you discuss?
3. Do you feel like all of your questions have been answered through the transition/IEP process?
4. Do you think the summary and reflection method used in this research helped you personally in this process?

I contacted P1 through text message, and she agreed to talk with me about the meeting. The interview was conducted via phone conference. During the interview, P1 mentioned that most of the time, she relies on her researching abilities to find programs in which her student may participate. She did feel that SPED1 answered her questions and, at the very least, alleviated fears she had about the future. Knowing that there would be

time to make decisions about the student's post-high school choices before school is out in May 2021 was a relief for P1. She is concerned about how goals are set for students and how it is determined if they have met them or not. She mentioned that even though she considers herself to be very vocal on behalf of her student, speaking with me and the questions I asked her made her think about things differently than she had before. She stated that this process made her more aware of things for which she needs to look. She noted that not all parents are as vocal about services as she is and that this process might help others as well. I thanked P1 for her participation and noted that I would be speaking with SPED1 soon as well.

SPED1 – 2

After Meeting 2, I asked SPED1 to complete a reflective summary of the meeting outcome. She mentioned that invited participants for this meeting included VOTAC, two members of the school administrative team, a regular education teacher, the APE teacher, and herself. The only one that confirmed he/she could not attend was the regular education teacher. The APE teacher and she attended the meeting virtually, and when no one else showed up for the meeting, she called P1 on the phone. They discussed continuing goals from the previous year due to the interruption of services caused by the COVID-19 school closure. She mentioned the team meeting again before the end of the school year to discuss post-high school transition plans.

Once I received this summary, I formulated questions and scheduled an interview with SPED1. Interview questions included:

1. Was everyone on the team notified of the time change?

2. Has the reflection and interview process helped you in how you deal with parents?
3. What would you like to see come out of this research effort?

The interview was conducted via telephone conference; the results of these questions were both disheartening and encouraging.

When the interview began, I asked about the meeting time change and team notification. SPED1 stated that the parent was sent three notices about the meeting as is mandated. On the first notice, the parent requested the time change. She then placed the time change in the virtual calendar used by the district, and it should have sent an email out to all the school-based participants notifying them of the change. She did not seem to be in favor of the research processes implemented by me. She stated that it did not affect her in any way because she was going to do what she needed to do with or without it. However, when asked what she hoped this research could produce for the future, she mentioned that she hoped it improved the process of transitions for MOD as well as inclusion students. She also hoped it would provide these students and their families with much-needed information about LRS services for post-high school.

VOTAC1 – 2

At the second meeting, VOTAC1 was not present and had sent an excusal request, which is standard protocol. The three questions asked are:

1. Is it unusual not to attend a transition/IEP for a high school senior?
2. Is it typical that this type of meeting lasts a short amount of time?
3. Should more team members have been present?

The interview was conducted via phone conference since VOTAC1 has been placed in quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure. VOTAC1 was eager to talk about this case. She stated that only four VOTAC persons were working in the district with 16 high schools. One high school can have nearly 200 students with IEPs or IAPs and receive services through a transition plan for vocational training. Often, she is only in attendance if the student has a change in services provided through a work skills training program or LRS or at the final transition meeting before the student leaves high school. Caddo Works is the program name established by the district to implement pre-service training for students that are receiving services from LRS.

Through Caddo Works, instructors teach students to fill out applications, open a bank account, and other basic skills needed before getting a job. The program provides much useful information. Sometimes, the parents do not feel equal to the six to eight district employees sitting there, and they have been worn down by the system over the years. Many parents just sit there and are not comfortable enough to ask questions. The whole goal of the final transition meeting is to provide them with enough information about resources that they do not feel as though they and their student are just being thrown out into the cold without support or someone to guide them. They are often given a point of contact for an agency called Families Helping Families, which services four parishes in Region 7 of the state. Unfortunately, though, some parents are afraid that if their student finds a job, they will lose the benefits check they receive from the government.

IS1 - 2

Just like VOTAC1, IS1 was not present at the second meeting; I met with him through a virtual video conference to discuss this. Questions asked included:

1. Is it typical for his position to be absent at an annual IEP?
2. Do you think this research has validity?
3. Do you think the program present in the spring is having the desired impact?
4. What would you like to see come of this research effort?

In the discussion, he mentioned that it was not typical that he does not attend a student's annual transition/IEP meeting, but due to the pandemic, it was often difficult to attend every meeting. He stated that since the main participant of this study is a senior, it will be important for all team members to be present at the transition meeting in May. The main topic of the conversation was the presentation of information to parents. He stated that he thought parents are often put in meetings with too much information provided at one time. This approach is often used to get the most information out to a group all at once. He thinks this is overwhelming to parents and that they often do not understand what is being presented. He suggested that there be meetings like this more often to provide information in a relaxed manner and not in a hurry because someone else still has to present.

For instance, he mentioned that the Caddo Works program is new and not well known at this particular school. He also mentioned that parents are not aware of LRS and the resources available through that agency. He would like to see students and parents have multiple events a year to gain information as important as this, instead of waiting until the student is transitioning out of high school. Also, he stated that parents need to

be more aware of continuing education opportunities after high school graduation that are offered by cooperating local universities to students with mental disabilities. When asked what the best thing to come out of this research would be, he stated that the development of a better information delivery system to educate parents would be desirable.

Chapter Conclusion

In the construction of Chapter 4, I supervised the transition/IEP meetings of one MOD high school junior and the team of individuals that supports the academic growth of this particular student. Since this student was a minor, I received consent to study from the mother. Known as P1, her consent allowed me to observe a team meeting, identify the participants, and ask them to write a reflective summary of the meeting. After receiving the summary from each member of the team, I was able to look for areas of collaboration and areas that identified weaknesses within the collaboration efforts of all members of the team. Subsequently, using their summaries as the basis for questioning, I interviewed each team member individually.

A second meeting was scheduled as well as summaries and interviews. Team members were allowed to comment on whether or not they thought the research process helped in their collaborative efforts. Each team member was treated with respect not only for his/her participation but for his/her knowledge of the transition/IEP system and willingness to help this process improve.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The transition/IEP team is integral to the future of MOD students' abilities to function in the adult world. According to IS1, the school where this research was conducted has nearly 200 high school students with an annual IEP or IAP. The abilities of team members to collaborate and ensure success is of the greatest importance for these students and was exemplified in the principal's eagerness to have this school participate in the research of this type.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify how members of the transition planning team view their collaborative efforts during the IEP meeting as well as the development of the transition plan and determine what the administration could do to help promote a greater effort of collaboration for this team. Annually there are nearly 6 million students with intellectual disabilities in America, many of which are trying to transition from high school to the workforce or post-secondary education (Andersson et al., 2000). This exemplifies the need for collaboration between members of the transition/IEP team. Identifying the collaborative efforts of the transition/IEP team encourages the team to focus on improving their efforts for the benefit of the student's post-high school life. By

using an observational case study through a critical theory lens, individual team members will be able to see clearly their efforts and find ways to improve their collaborative actions within the team.

The goal of the team is to determine the best course of study for the individual student and plan for the best possible post-secondary outcomes. This study was designed to allow participants the opportunity to see their participation and potential within the team and enhance it through self-realization and, therefore, improve the process (Bronner, 2011). The choice of critical theory emphasized how this particular group, the transition/IEP team, works together and how studying this group can lead to an improvement in the process (Sim & Von Loon, 2012), thus broadening the understanding of team members' experience of the transition/IEP process (Tyson, 2015). The use of interviews with team members lends itself to critical theory as well, in that deriving meaning from narrative enhances the understanding of the shared moment (Sim & Von Loon, 2012). This aspect of the research was used to provide descriptive and summative documentation of the transition/IEP teams' collaborative efforts (Stake, 1995).

This type of narrative is typical of qualitative research (Merriam, 2009) and is symbolic of its theoretical origins. The focus of the research is to understand, generate and discover through the investigative process. The ability of the researcher to be flexible is necessary to identify the evolving and emerging data. The researcher is the main apparatus for data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Merriam, 2009).

Findings

Riesen et al. (2014) determined that unfamiliarity with the existing system is a systemic barrier for both students with intellectual disabilities and their parents. This

basic unfamiliarity poses a difficulty in navigating a successful transition to adult life. They also stated that the ability of the transition/IEP team to work collaboratively was the most important recommendation of their study. These findings helped steer the direction of my research. My research findings included suggestions from several participants that parents need to be better educated in both the SPED process and the available opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities post-high school. Best practices for the transition/IEP meeting, as outlined by Arndt et al. (2006), states that all participants should be educated in the process, know their rights, and be willing to participate in goal setting. Most of the participants in my research, including P1, mention that parents often are not educated in the transition/IEP process; therefore, they are unable or unwilling to participate fully. Al-Saaideh and Al-Zyoud, (2015) found that the improvement of communication between team members was best enhanced through collaborative efforts. One response during an interview was that parents often just sit through transition/IEP meetings saying nothing and waiting to sign off on what was presented without any understanding of what was stated, completely limiting their participation and devaluing the collaboration process. The success of the transition/IEP team is hinged on the ability of team members to collaborate, and problem solve when faced with challenges (Michaels & Ferrara, 2005).

Challenges to collaboration efforts include having common goals, resources, and shared decision-making. There is a need for professional development that benefits those involved in the collaborative effort to ensure efforts are directed toward positive results (Morgan, 2016). Many of the team members recommended not only offering educational opportunities for parents to learn more about available services and agencies but that this

should happen more often during a student's high school career. It was suggested by more than one participant that this type of event be held almost like a job fair or college fair is held for regular education students.

The common thread for each transition/IEP meeting for this particular student was SPED1 and P1. Both participants, without the other's knowledge, determined that the parent is the most problematic member of the IEP team. They are uninformed about the IEP system, related services, and often their own students' academic abilities. In this instance, P1 is a pediatric nurse. She considers herself to be very educated and resourceful but admits she is sometimes inexperienced in the avenues open to her student post-high school. Likewise, SPED1 mentioned that it is often evident that parents are not aware of their own students' basic academic capabilities as well as unaware of the services and agencies available to them in post-high school. Unfortunately, by the time parents are made aware of this information, their students have concluded their high school experiences. Parents often feel as if they are left to fend for themselves when it is too little too late for their students' futures.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine how members of the transition/IEP team viewed each other's collaborative efforts. Through this observational case study, I was able to determine one Theta and several Iotas common within the team. The one Theta that dominated the summaries and interviews was that each team members sees himself/herself as highly participatory within the team, and as collaborating to the best of their abilities with their co-workers, but not necessarily with the parent.

Iotas that presented were common to most of the participants. Agreeably, all participants believe that parents need more information sooner within their students' high school careers. Also agreed upon was that students should be better informed of the type of services they can receive and how they will receive them, ultimately engaging the students in their transitions more effectively. Another Iota presented consistently was that there needs to be greater community involvement in programs that help transition MOD high school students into the workforce. In the end, all participants felt as if parents needed more information, more resources, and more understanding of the transition process before the final transition meeting.

Through the interviews, I gained a rapport with the team members and the challenges they faced in helping students progress academically. Since SPED1 and P1 were the only team members present at both meetings, I asked them both if they thought reflection, summary, and discussion had enhanced the process for them. Surprisingly, SPED1 said emphatically no, reasoning that the process is what it is. She was committed to do her part, no matter what that may be, which in all honesty, is the correct answer. All team members are there for the best benefit of the students. However, P1 stated that the process had made her more aware of her level of participation and what she should be looking for in both the questions she asks and the answers she accepts.

The conclusion of the study seems evident. Special education team members are very aware of their levels of collaboration and of what is expected of their positions on the team. Parents need both general knowledge about the SPED system/process and timely, easily understood information. This knowledge should be up-to-date and presented to parents often and in a manner where they do not feel intimidated or looked

down upon. Parents should be armed with the correct information to make informed choices for their MOD students as they approach adulthood.

Recommendations for Administration

In order to educate parents, the school district and the individual schools need to provide opportunities for parents for a better understanding of the SPED process as well as services available to students with intellectual disabilities. Administration, at both the district and school levels, should facilitate the process of educating parents of students with intellectual disabilities. Providing opportunities for these parents to learn more about the SPED system would serve to improve school/parent relationships. By holding college/job fair type events suggested by research participants, community relations would be improved. Together, these actions would better serve all stakeholders and improve both outcomes and post-high school life for students with intellectual disabilities.

Job fair events could be structured according to the students' needs and/or grade levels. For instance, the academic and community needs of a 9th grader would not be the same as a 12th grader. Events could be scheduled based on the services needed in that academic year. Since employment skills are taught when students achieve readiness, lower high school grades are taught soft skills, and upper high school grades are taught hands-on job training. The job fair events could be structured this way as well.

Offering educational opportunities for parents of students with intellectual disabilities should not be limited to high school. Parents of students with intellectual disabilities should be offered educational learning opportunities for SPED as soon as their student receives placement and at multiple levels of their learning. It was apparent in this

research that parents with more education and more opportunities to learn about the SPED process are better equipped to participate in the collaborative efforts of the IEP team.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several notable recommendations for future research. Repeating this research may develop different findings based on the interactions of different participants, which is typical in a case study (Stake, 1995). However, the possibility of redoing the same research using a video of each meeting and having each participant watch it after their reflection might produce different ideals among the participants about their levels of collaboration. It is one thing to recall from memory their best efforts and another entirely to see it replayed for them. Another recommendation for furthering my research is the potential for the student's collaboration with the team. The parent in this research did not believe that students were included enough in the discussion or in the dissemination of information concerning transition planning. Past research has suggested that students should begin developing a presentation style that allows them to lead their own transition IEP meetings, beginning as early as middle school (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). Students in the transition process should be learning self-advocacy skills and how to speak for themselves in a setting very much like the transition/IEP meetings. This would also need to address the students' levels of participation, use of self-advocacy, and self-determination (Haring & Tomlin, 1999). Another key study for furthering my research would be to note whether or not educating parents to make a positive difference for the benefit of students.

More study should be devoted to outcomes of parent-school partnerships.

Research should be conducted to determine if parents become more willing to attend and participate in meetings if a district improves their education about available student resources. Also, more research is necessary to determine the level of involvement offered by community-based agencies, which are designed to help parents discover the federally-funded help available for students with disabilities. Involving these agencies in the transition process would allow parents to become familiar with available resources pre-graduation instead of giving parents an agency pamphlet at graduation. Perhaps involving community-based agencies earlier would help parents understand what to expect in the student's future. Likewise, perhaps the impact of vocational services which include students with IEPs or IAPs would be different with parents that are more informed about the available agencies and avenues that help transition students from high school to post-high school. Lastly, further research could determine the efficacy of beginning the instructional programs earlier in a student's academic life and what, if any, impact such action would have on post-high school outcomes.

Many of these ideas would require a longer timeframe of study in order to provide accurate analysis. As a SPED teacher myself, it would, in my opinion, be well worth the time and effort needed to ensure that students with intellectual disabilities are completing high school with all things necessary for them to have productive and satisfying adult lives. Even though I teach elementary students with intellectual disabilities, I have always believed that teaching students with intellectual disabilities how to perform a job will create a lifelong loyal employee. The transition/IEP for high school students with intellectual disabilities should be the beginning of this effort. However, it can only be

accomplished if all participants are at least knowledgeable of the resources available to ensure such outcomes are possible. As a parent of students with intellectual disabilities myself, the best advice I received was when a teacher told me I was my child's first and best advocate. An advocate without knowledge is not a worthy supporter and cannot effectively promote the best outcomes for their students with intellectual disabilities' future.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS IDENTIFIED

Student Demographics Identified

<u>Articles</u>	<u>Exceptionality</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>
Andersson, Hawkins, O'Day, Rangel-Diaz, & Wolters, 2000	V, O, OHI	14-22	N/A	N/A
Haring & Tomlin, 1999	N/A	18+	N/A	N/A
Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014	LD, S, A, OHI, ED, ID, ALLOTHERS	6-21	N/A	W, B, AI, A, H, 2 or more
Blackorby & Wagner, 1996	D/B, H, S, OHI, MR, O, V, ED, D,LD			
Casey, 2012	N/A	14-21	N/A	N/A
Swanson, 2008	SLD, OHI, ED, MR, ALL OTHERS	6-21		W, B, H, A, AI
Northeastern University School of Law, 2012	ALL	14-21	N/A	N/A
<p>Key:</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="flex: 1; min-width: 150px;"> V=Visual S=Speech A=Autism O=Orthopedic ED=Emotionally Disturbed LD=Learning Disabled MR=Mentally Retarded OHI=Other Health Impaired ID= Intellectual Disability D/B=Deaf/Blind D= Deaf H=Hearing Impaired </div> <div style="flex: 1; min-width: 150px;"> W=White B=Black AI=American Indian A=Asian H=Hispanic </div> </div>				

APPENDIX B

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IDENTIFIED

Programs and Services Identified

<u>Article</u>	<u>H.S.</u>	<u>Diploma vs Certificate</u>	<u>H.S. Vocational Training</u>	<u>Post H.S. Training</u>
Andersson, Hawkins, O'Day, Rangel-Diaz, & Wolters, 2000	N/A	27% D	N/A	N/A
Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014	N/A	68% D	N/A	67%
Blackorby & Wagner, 1996	N/A	N/A	N/A	49,154
Mader & Butrymowicz, 2014	N/A	61% C	N/A	N/A
Swanson, 2008	N/A	56% D 14% C	N/A	31%

Key: % based on number of SPED students enrolled in HS

APPENDIX C

STRATEGY MATRIX

Search Categories

Source	A	B	C	D	E	F
1)Arndt, S. A., Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2006)						√
2)Benitez, D., Lattimore, J., & Wehmeyer, M. (2005)	√					
3)Bindal, T., Wall, D., & Goodyear, H. (2014)					√	
4)Boswell, S., & Stern, S. (2011)						√
5)Espiner, D., & Hartnett, F. M. (2011)					√	
6)Flannery, K., Lombardi, A., & Kato, M. (2015)	√	√			√	
7)Geenen, S., Powers, L., & Lopez-Vasquesz, A. (2005)		√				
8)Gothberg, J., Peterson, L., Peak, M., & Sedaghat, J. (2015).		√				
9) Goupil, G., Tasse, M., Garcin, N., & Dore, C. (2002)		√				
10) Hawbaker, B. (2007) √						
11) Hughes, C. (2008)				√		
12) Johnson, T., Serrano, J., & Veit, D. (2013)		√				

APPENDIX D

KEY WORDS

Key Words

Key Word	Source Number (See Table 2.3 for Source detail)
IEP	1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 18, 20, 25, 28
Legislation/ Policy	17, 21, 24, 25
Goals	8, 10, 18, 25
Technology	19, 27
Planning	3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 18, 23, 31
Parents	4, 7, 9
Collaboration	4, 7, 8, 18, 23, 24, 26
Meetings	1, 3
Teamwork	4, 8
Student	1, 6, 9, 10, 18, 20
Disabilities	1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27, 32
Transition 32, 33	2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31,
Vocational Education	2, 3, 31
Employment	2, 16, 24, 31
Job Skills	9, 14, 25
Teacher	7, 9, 10, 20

APPENDIX E

SUPERINTENDENT LETTER

Superintendent Letter

Spring 2020,

Dear Superintendent _____,

Having received IRB permission form my university, it is my intent to ask your permission to conduct a case study in your school district. The study is an observational case study through a critical theory lens of “the perceptions of IEP team members of collaborative efforts in the transition planning of a high school SPED student.”

Through observations and interviews it is the intent of the study to educate all members of this team(s) on the importance of each individuals’ participation and collaboration. It is with great respect for your position and your knowledge of your district that I ask you to recommend a specific high school as the model for this research. It is with the utmost respect for all involved that I intend to adhere to the IRB’s strict rules of confidentiality for individuals, the school involved, as well as the district. All findings will be available upon request when the study is completed.

Sincerely,

Teresa Henderson (Researcher)

Date

APPENDIX F

PRINCIPAL LETTER

Principal Letter

December 14, 2019

Dear Principal _____,

I am in the process of developing research into the collaborative efforts of IEP/Transition team members of high school Students with intellectual disabilities. Having received IRB permission to conduct research, I have been approved by Superintendent _____ to conduct my research at your school and with your recommendations of participants.

It is at this time that I request of you the names, guardians, and contact information of any students in the Transition phase of their education process that you believe would consider participation.

All participants will be treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Data gathered will be available upon request at the conclusion of research. Requested changes will be considered before publication.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Teresa Henderson (Researcher)

Date

Superintendent Approval Signature

Date

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPATION LETTER

Participation Letter

Spring 2020

Dear Parents:

I am conducting research of the IEP Transitional Plan process. Your participation is very important to the success of my research. Your participation as well as your students would be greatly valued. Your time is appreciated and completely anonymous.

My career as a special education elementary teacher for the past nine years has led me to have an interest in the continued education and possible career paths of my own students. Through my doctoral studies at Louisiana Tech University, I have developed a plan to study the transition plan process of high school special education students.

Through this research, I would like to observe your students IEP meeting and conduct interviews of all participants with your consent. This research would allow not just me, but everyone involved in the transition plan process, better understanding of key elements in the transition plan process. You would be allowed the opportunity to review all research pertaining to you and your student before publication. Anything you do not agree with can and will be addressed upon your request to reach an agreement.

Your consent and participation in this research would be anonymous and would be kept confidential. The goal of this research is to identify the best practices of transition planning in an effort to help all high school special education students reach the best post-high school outcomes.

Thank you in advance for your time and considerations. I greatly respect your time and judgement in this matter.

Sincerely,

Teresa Henderson (Researcher)

Date

Participating High School Principal

Date

Participating Superintendent

Date

APPENDIX H

CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

Title of Research Project: How Are the Collaborative Efforts of the Transition Plan Team Viewed by Its Members?

Name of the Primary Researcher: Teresa Henderson

Primary Researcher's Phone Number: 318-560-2979

A. Purpose and Background

The researcher (Teresa Henderson) is a graduate student who is conducting this research for her doctoral dissertation under the direction of Dr. Brian McCoy of the School of Education at Louisiana Tech University.

The purpose of this research is to determine collaborative efforts of the transition plan team and how they are viewed by each other.

Procedures

You are being asked to participate in observations of the IEP/transition planning procedures for your high school Special Education student. Participation is completely anonymous and confidential.

B. Risks

Some questions may be of a personal nature which may cause some distress. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

C. Benefits

The benefits of this research may be a better understanding of the best practices in the transition planning/ IEP process for all participants and future students as well.

D. Confidentiality

Your name will not appear on any documentation associated with the final research document. Consent forms will be kept by the researcher under lock and key for no less than five years. At no time will any identifiable information be used in this research. Your personal information will be kept confidential and participation is anonymous.

E. Alternatives

If you choose not to participate, no alternative procedures are necessary.

F. Costs and Compensation

There is no cost to participate in this study. No compensation will be paid to participants.

A. Questions

Any questions can be directed to the primary researcher, Teresa Henderson, who will be glad to answer any questions or concerns regarding participation and who can be contacted at 318-560-2979.

PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY IS VOLUNTARY. I am free to decline to participate in this research study at any time.

Printed Name of Minor Child

Signature of Parent

Date

Signature of Primary Researcher

Date

APPENDIX I

OBSERVATION FORM

Observation Form

Interviewee:	Age:	Gender:	Ethnicity:
Location of interview:	Experience level:	Role on the team:	Time:
Theta: Collaboration efforts		Delta: comments that resonate	

APPENDIX J

REFLECTION FORM

Reflection Form

Interviewee:

Time and place of interview:

[illegible]

APPENDIX K

HUMAN USE APPROVAL LETTER



OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS

TO: Ms. Teresa Henderson and Dr. Bryan McCoy

FROM: Dr. Richard Kordal, Director of Intellectual Property & Commercialization
(OIPC)
rkordal@latech.edu *RSK*

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: January 24, 2020

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposed study entitled:

HUC 20-071

**"How are the Collaborative Efforts of the Transition Plan team
Viewed by its Members?"**

The proposed study's revised procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Informed consent is a critical part of the research process. The subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary. It is important that consent materials be presented in a language understandable to every participant. If you have participants in your study whose first language is not English, be sure that informed consent materials are adequately explained or translated. Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

Projects should be renewed annually. *This approval was finalized on January 24, 2020 and this project will need to receive a continuation review by the IRB if the project continues beyond January 24, 2021.* ANY CHANGES to your protocol procedures, including minor changes, should be reported immediately to the IRB for approval before implementation. Projects involving NIH funds require annual education training to be documented. For more information regarding this, contact the Office of Sponsored Projects.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study. If changes occur in recruiting of subjects, informed consent process or in your research protocol, or if unanticipated problems should arise it is the Researchers responsibility to notify the Office of Sponsored Projects or IRB in writing. The project should be discontinued until modifications can be reviewed and approved.

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

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APPENDIX L

MEETING 1 TRANSCRIPT AND PARTICIPATION GRAPH

Meeting 1 Transcript and Participation Graph

1st IEP Meeting 3/12/2020

Speaker 1 (00:00:00):

[inaudible] parish news, the college and I'll [inaudible] her part they're going to do is I'm sending Hein, I'm director or the program for successful employment over at [inaudible] parish community college. We do some course development, but what I'm hoping decided that April to come out into the schools as a Parker move have schools and Louisiana rehabilitation service, we're able to provide something they call it pre the upon that transition. So what the government calls it, what it means to you is we're able to come out and work with students on trying to figure out in advance what are some of the things you're interested in. Um, what is the job market like in the area in here? How do we put together a resume? How do you fill out applications, the nuts and bolts, things that, um, there are some high school classes that do, but we're just focusing on how we transition into employment.

Speaker 1 (00:01:19):

Um, and this is specifically for students who have either an IEP or a follow up for fun because statistically if you've got a disability, you might need some palpitations and we want you to understand and how to talk with employer about when to disclose and what you're gonna need goes. So we've got several people but definitely on this morning and champions if anybody knows Herman here, she goes out and she does a great job with the classes. And then we also are able to offer something a little bit different and that's work based learning experiences. The way that that works. Best case scenario, we're able to connect a student with an entry level temporary position and if the LRS Louisiana

rehabilitation services approves the student for that service, they're actually paid for that. And it's only so many hours and the gym is a limit on it. But um, two benefits to that.

Speaker 1 (00:02:30):

One, if it's part of the work program, if you have a student that happens to be receiving benefits, then uh, we're going to walk you through that with the work incentives coordinator but that should not be counted against benefits. But it has to be reported the proper way. And we're here to walk you through that because nobody has a charger that's very important. But I have a student worker right now who's gone through that and I can tell you that, um, I have one student that didn't go through the process and had a hiccup and had to go back and get things fixed. But the student that went through the process the way we asked them to is doing just fine. So we're able to do both things. And the great thing about being able to be paid in high school, when you look at how people have success over time, if you're able to be paid while you're in school, no matter, you're much more likely to transition successfully to pay employment after high school, if that's working while you go to college or ready. Those are some of the things that partnership with LRS and habits.

Speaker 2 (00:04:02):

And basically I'm the vocation transition curriculum specialist. Uh, also one of my colleagues, Rebecca Hanberry, we both are familiar with this program, meaning that we have implemented at other schools. Like what other schools? Other schools such as green ups, high school. They have vocational, vocational training agreements, rat me out at Applebee's and also CCS. Okay. **They teach them how to clean, do other things in the community because nobody wants to take her** or have their child to go to school for 20 or

20 plus years and just go home. Right. Have you seen kids at Walmart and other places with sometimes physical disabilities? They're working. Okay, so those questions later on, once the weevil phase, which is the work based learning experiments takes place, we will address those issues as well, but the first phase is just please Prius, which is pre employment transitional services teaching them.

Speaker 2 (00:05:08):

That I think is what, six or seven components of like you know how to function and how to fill out an application when you get ready to work for garner. Man, we might have some nurses in here. We might have some doctors in here. We might have some good housekeeping keepers in here sounding okay, but we want to make sure that your children have a fair chance post-secondary with once they exit out of high school. Ms. Jordan is an excellent teacher. She's doing what she can. She would, hard class was targeted. She selected the students that she thought were way up. Okay. Uh, not only do we have Reynolds high school, we have LSUS, uh, has participated in this program. We have SMA. They have children that are actually, I mean students, I keep calling them the children that are actually working and thriving. Okay. The funding agent and agency, which is something called LRS. Have you ever heard of his agency? All parents raise your hand. [inaudible]

Speaker 2 (00:06:19):

post. You have to open the pamphlet and look. Find region seven, region seven. Your parents know you're a student before pop up here. Seniors. Seniors. You're here. Okay. Preconcept let me tell you some about reading center reading sat right now everyone knows when the IEP is, right? Individual educational plan. Well, we're gonna

eventually shift these kids off to LRS and they have an individual plan for an employment, which is a IP IPE. Raise your hand if you've ever been looking and you see the individuals with disabilities working all the time. Okay? So it will is a big uh, component of postsecondary work based learning instructions. Okay. But we're trying to catch these kids right out of high school. Okay. And so there's, I can talk all day long, but this is a great initiative, a great program and we hope you're comfortable before you sign up.

Speaker 2 (00:07:27):

And then during the process, cause at anytime you don't understand something, you have Ms. Jordan, you have mrs Sandy who represent VOC use. Currently I only vendored rack down. And when we say vendor, they're going to bring staff in to come and train your kids before we put them out there on a work based learning experience. And what y'all are on work bags. These kids may be two hours a week. Okay? Uh, my kids that I'm monitored and my teachers and staff that I manage are green olives. I love Applebee's. Those kids learn how to clean, learn how to interact with the public or whatever. They know how to set up the kiosk where you can do your credit cards. It's very informative, very informative, and very a face, a very good skill. So I can't lose their social skills, but I can talk all day. Rebecca? Good. You want to add? Hold on. Wow.

Speaker 1 (00:08:28):

You did good. I don't, there's nothing I need to add. I will. Well, I guess I will be [inaudible] students that you want to explore some possibilities for college and that's another thing that addresses, it doesn't just talk about work. It also talks about college. It

can be additional training. There are [inaudible] programs for kids, kids, I'm sorry. We know always get our kids, I'm sorry you're not kids or young adults. Vidsy has some opportunities for you to go and take classes and learn more when you leave high school and miss city, we'll talk. They'll cover those things when they come to teach you. So you'll go through a series of classes at first and then then in your second year you'll do some work in the community. And you'll get paid for that work. You'll taste what it's like to get a paycheck. And mom, if you're, we always say this, if, if there's some kind of benefit that's coming from the government such as a check, there is something that's available called benefits counseling.

Speaker 1 (00:09:45):

And what you do is you learn how your, your child can actually enjoy and reap the good feelings that you get from working. But it does, it won't jeopardize that, that benefit that you're getting from the government. So there you can go through some count. We can hook you up. Ms Cindy has the resources to hook you up with some benefits, counseling. If you want to check in on that and say, look, I want my child to feel like they're accomplishing something. But at the same time, I'm really worried about this benefit that we get so that you can talk to that counselor and learn how to make that balance. Okay. So you don't have to be worried about that. Or eight. Um, uh, the other, the other thing is, I want to remind everybody, this whole program is an affiliation with LRS, LRS and Louisiana rehabilitation services at random pass that pamphlet out that that is a state agency that is responsible for helping people with disabilities.

Speaker 1 (00:10:47):

The state both train, retrain, and find jobs. And they are the there that put the folks that hold the checkbook, they paid for this program. It doesn't cost this program. Does it cost [inaudible] schools and porn sense now because they pay for it. It's up to them as to whether your child gets accepted into the program. And we have no, no, I'm say sell over that at all. And so today when, when mr Chuck gets here from LRS, you're going to fill out some paperwork if you need to bring that paperwork home and you can, I know we're kind of behind that, that sometimes I think he said something about maybe some of their parents having a, having a belief we would much rather you fill it out now that's get it all done. Let's get it over with. Bam, we're finished. If you possibly have time. But he's going to bring that paperwork. You are actually applying to Louisiana rehab for services for your child. All right? That's what you're doing. And they will be the one that says whether you're accepted or not.

Speaker 3 (00:11:55):

99.9%

Speaker 1 (00:11:57):

of the time, if you or a child has an IEP and I have AP, you'll get accepted. So don't be worried about whether you're going to be accepted or not. The conditions to be accepted are you have to have a disability. You have to have either an IEP or an what's called an IAP, which that y'all don't get if y'all have you and your own ease. You don't have to worry about that other thing. But I just wanted to make that disclaimer in front of this. Although we are organizing this, we as encounter the schools, this is actually an LRS program that we, that we are bringing into your child's life to make sure, you know, back

in the day when you had an IEP meeting, you should just go, the teacher would just go, Oh yeah. By the way, there's all these agencies and huge and this piece of paper, right? Yeah. That's not good transition. We want to bring these agencies into your kids' lives now so that when they leave training, it's like this, we're handing them off. Like

Speaker 2 (00:12:54):

I'll send her training

Speaker 1 (00:12:55):

position where there's this big gap where we just go, Hey,

Speaker 3 (00:12:58):

over that building down there,

Speaker 2 (00:13:04):

right? Yeah. So we're bringing them into your kids. Okay. Okay. And basically what the process will be now. Okay. First of all, let me just also add the nine times out of 10, you prop your head is probably going to do the work based learning experience due to time constraints. It's just, I mean, this school, this school year format. Okay. So basically they're going to be doing the Prius, which is the free, uh, employment training service. Okay. That means that a representative or half member from, uh, mr [inaudible], uh, office, which is our vendor. When we think of think, think of a train, okay. They're gonna try the three and party services. That's what you're gonna do today. You're gonna sign up. And there's just a simple statement that I agree that my student will participate in the uh, CalWORKs transition program, et cetera, et cetera. Then Mr. Bond is on his way.

Speaker 2 (00:14:07):

Who's the manager with a two page application and prayerfully that you'll feel that application now is just two pages. Okay. And then you're going to have to give him permission to get a copy of your work IEP and that's it. Then you're received notification for Ms. Jordan who was accepted who wasn't accepted and then that's given permission, which is a far staff number from [inaudible] to come in and work with your kids. Second thing next year is going to be a little bit difficult. I mean different you going to have the pre ed services and also awareness but a lot of details. But with that particular part, uh, y'all have to worry about, cause Caddo would try, we'll provide transportation for these work based learning experience. Okay. It was so I was so happy to see my little kids over the grid. Those get their first little 25 or \$30 check and we'll avoid is melting my heart time. I was able to buy my family some chicken this week or I paid for my little brothers to get a haircut. You know what's accurate and I can see the grid now. [inaudible]

Speaker 2 (00:15:24):

paychecks. Come on. Yeah. [inaudible] yeah, it was just, it was, yes. Hartfield okay, so I'm working hard. I'm buying new, the [inaudible] to make sure you guys are comfortable. Okay. But basically that's what's going to happen today. You don't to sign up with mr B and also Ms. Jordan and I'll be here all that to be here. I wanted to mention something when you're done about that. Crazy. Okay. And you know miss Jordan's an excellent teacher so we don't sign up there. You got to fill out the little two page application and you're going to give us permission to give the LRS agent permission to sign your kids up. And guess what? When they walk across the stage,

whether it's this, normally this school year or whatever school, they have a point that means that Hey, if it doesn't work out at subway or wherever they are training in L or S which is the state in the state, get money from the feds are going to have to constantly train your with your child. Okay,

Speaker 1 (00:16:39):

I'm new to this just like you guys are. So I'm learning this program as well. But I really got excited about, and they were talking about the free world training y'all self advocacy. That is something that they're going to work with them on and that is so important so that when they're out there in the world, they know their rights and they know how they should be treated. And I just feel like that's really important. So that was a component that I got really excited about as a teacher. Um, so that was something, I don't know if it was Brenda and the mission, but self advocacy is a part of the program and I'm excited about that.

Speaker 2 (00:17:18):

A lot of information about South Africa and see, and we actually have one of our college students is part of the partners in policy making class of 2020 where they go down and testify and talk with the legislators about why is it that these students are supported to go on and get education and training. Um, while we're waiting. One point about to put in your year and that's if we want the flow to pay Workforce learning to be smooth as possible.

Speaker 1 (00:17:51):

One of the biggest challenges for some people, not for everybody, we just like any other job. When I got my job and on this hand, Mary got hers, we have to have proof of some

things before they was employess. One of them is some form of identification as a state ID or a driver's license or permit. If you have that, that's going to be really important for you to have. If you can do that before the fall, then you're not going to be trying to figure that out. We've got some time. If you can't find that original social security card, they won't take an award letter. They won't, they have to see the social security card cause it's part of another doc government document. When you fill out tax forms, that's good fun. Um, but you have to have enough information to complete what's called an [inaudible].

Speaker 1 (00:18:47):

And the easiest way for most people to do that is to have some form of state ID and an original social security card. If you happen to be an immigrant, I can help you. There's a different form. Okay. But if you know that now, hopefully by the time school rolls around, you'll have all that on board because that's the only thing that can take some time for some people. Um, Oh thank you. I forgot. A lot of employers now are doing the direct deposit. They will need to cut a check to, you know, y'all might experience that yourself. And so we're, we're asking students in addition to having that state ID and then social that they have a checking account and we found [inaudible] things in town or there at least three, three do we put on our sheet that for \$5 for open a student checking and it's rude. The students [inaudible]

Speaker 2 (00:19:43):

and then you will get al.,l of that information at the count of, cause we don't want to overwhelm you, but it's a good thing to realize like next year when we started work based learning experience, you're going to need a state ID, a social security card and also

a direct deposit as they stayed there for several because they might see that they're getting \$40 a month, but at least they know what a bank is and getting that community based experience. Cause unfortunately moms, I have a son with a disability and I would love to stay here for the rest of his life. But uh, sorry I'm going to leave here before he leaves here. So I don't want nobody take advantage of my child so at least they'll have that exposure and that experience. That's why probably say free is and know post pre uh, employment services cause they need to know about these facts. Okay. And I think that's basically it. Um, I see if I'm missing anything. Okay. Remember social security card. Oh, I'm going to recreate portfolios. Like all my kids at green oats, they have a copy of the social security card. They haven't caught the ID. Any dog you want those things. Okay. Uh, and I would give mrs uh, Jordan binders. So when definitely your son X high school and uh, when your daughter acts in high school, they already have that info. Nice. Okay.

Speaker 2 (00:21:24):

When you got cell phones checking your counselor for your, for your child, definitely you send them out the way you want. Um, you can, I think it does. Okay. Well what happens is, but let me interject for theater because I still have, my son has a disability and my, my name is on that checking account also. Yeah, absolutely. I was going to say. Oh yeah, I'm saying you can, you can monitor that and try and help them work through this whole process. How the checking accounts work. Chase bank. If I am going to give her that information. Cause my son, he's [inaudible] and he has his own little to color and I and sometimes today he's 25 years old. Mom, can you help me out with some lunch money? Okay. So I can just transfer that \$10 on in there and all of his, cause he went to

college, all of his refund shakes, everything went into our joint account. But his name had to be on that account. So yes and yes and D and I love it cause when the overdrafts, they don't charge them anything.

Speaker 3 (00:22:32):

Yeah. I had the same setup with my son, um, and he is, uh, he's all mine now. And, uh, I can see all of his transactions. I can see everything that he does. Um, because a lot of you already know I have a child with autism as well and he's 18 and he's, you know, he, he works, he has a job. But, um, he, I see everything he does and um, I can put money into his account and if he needs it and I can monitor that. And if he ever drafts when she's only done it once, but they didn't charge him a fee or anything.

Speaker 2 (00:23:06):

What bank is chase? Chase? Chase is excellent. I hope they don't know. He's 25 years old cause I was going on my time. Some horror stories. [inaudible] Louisiana school and my students can do better with some stuff that that's, you know, it's just, it's just I think 18 or a boy, he's a senior this year too. And that's just the general responsibilities.

Speaker 3 (00:23:38):

And what I was able to do with his is you can turn back on the bike in Montgomery, he can't overdrive, they just it for him.

Speaker 1 (00:23:46):

So we don't, we don't even have to close it. So X different lines. We'll have different things. There are some prepaid cards, like the green.cards in blue birds that will act that way and you can direct deposit to some of those. So there are options without having to

deal with and what we do in class. Just that you notice that, that you can build on what we already do.

Speaker 3 (00:24:11):

Um, every month at the beginning of the month, we sit down with a one month calendar and the kids have a fake account in my class and we pay bills out of it. So we also put things in there like that, people's birthdays and holidays. And so when things are coming up and they're paying their bills, you know, they get a paycheck every two weeks and they pay bills, I'll ask them, do you want bad birthday president or so and so, so they can think about this unexpected or unusual expenses. And I'm just letting you know now. And you have some children who were like, no [inaudible] it's fun to have those numbers, but that's a good thing that you can do with all once they had their own account is sit down once a month and then go through, okay, is this, when you're getting paid, these are some things that are coming up, you know, 4th of July. Would you like the basketball, fireworks? Yeah. Those kinds of things. And uh, start letting them think about how they spend their money, how they budget their money, because it would be really easy. And you know, a lot of them, sometimes we'll have to make a choice between paying their cable bill or paying their light bill. And we talked about the importance of keeping lights on over cable and you know, things like that. So, um, that's something that we already do and so you guys can take that.

Speaker 2 (00:25:29):

Okay. Do we have any questions before we start? Okay. I know something maybe a little bit more [inaudible] more information, but just a reminder. I just, she's passing

around a sign in sheet. I mean when you write your name and the parent name and also the child's name. Remember this is going to be on the IEP, so,

Speaker 1 (00:25:55):

Oh boy. She, before anybody leaves, she needs to speak to the group as a whole real quick.

Speaker 2 (00:26:00):

Sure. After she speaks, I'd like to take any questions because this mother just had a ferry because brushes you will answer him so that everybody can have some good, hi, I'm Teresa Henderson. I'm a Spanish teacher in cattery parish, currently working,

Speaker 1 (00:26:16):

working on my doctorate in education. And my dissertation is based on exactly what you're going through right now.

Speaker 3 (00:26:23):

And I just wanted to let you know, I'm a member of the autistics uncloak too. And we do have a joint checking account. He'll be 27 next month, which makes me feel old. So anyway, my dissertation is on the collaboration of the IEP training. Do some things. How do the members of that team work together to do exactly

Speaker 1 (00:26:44):

what this program is going to do for your child. Everyone in the team has a voice. Hey, we're, we're all on the team together and I would, I would love to be a part of your theme as you're going through this process and getting your child into a transition program that will create a job for them. But it's up to you to let me and um, dr Pendleton has been so nice to me and providing this opportunity and I would just love to share this experience

with y'all. You have any questions? I have flyers. Um, if you are interested in, uh, part of my research, I'd love to have you, uh, that guy at this while she's traveling. Thank you Theresa. Um, what, what should they, how will they let them know if I phone number and email on wire, but, but if you think you're interested in what can we do?

Speaker 1 (00:27:56):

Sort of like a blanket instead of done. Would you guys be okay if she attended some of your transition? IEP. Okay. Would anybody have a problem with her attending and just being a spectator on the side? If your child is under 18, I have to have your permission just like with anything you do at school. So would it work? You can get with him and find out when these IPS will be. What my research entails is I need to attend to IEP meeting and this would probably work out good because some of you are going to be need to have a meeting soon, right. To join this program and then you might have, and they're actually going to have all today. We're having one right now.

Speaker 1 (00:28:37):

So, uh, and then in between it involves the interviews. It's just to see what did you think about the system? The program? Um, there's no, um, part of my, my research that identifies anyone. So if you're the first person to sign up, he student one and your parents, that's it. There's no demographics of all. There's no identifies people but names where you live or anything like that. And it's just to try to see if we can improve the process, you know, uh, of everyone's involvement, including students. Cause you don't want your students to be a part of it. They don't have to. But I happen to have your permission to be a part of that. Theresa, that information. Anything very guys, because

we, this program just started last week. We worked closely with gypsy and LRS to make changes that way.

Speaker 1 (00:29:47):

So the question that we had at the front of was, well, Amy, any of the work they've done will be done after school. So the answer to that question is it depends. It depends on the job. Um, we also have this program [inaudible] and the captain Shreve, um, some of their kids have decided they want to work after school, so they're working like one young lady does. Um, grooming for a pet place. The animals, she likes to GRU and so she's learning how to groom. She does that after school. Her mother is provide transportation, worked out for her. Um, other kids, they're going during the day and the big yellow school buses come pick them up so that it just depends on the child and, and what, what that child wants.

Speaker 2 (00:30:52):

But compared to an 18 year old or 21 year old that had had some experiences, uh, will be that deciding factor. But according to Caddo it's going to be during the day. Yeah. And then you, your child might be such a great worker. They might want to hire them, you know, cause like as you see at Walmart and all these other places, brochures, you have people that are fully functioning and that, well not fully functioning, but with support, it's just like the IEP gives you educational support. We don't give them a functional community day support. Okay. And work readiness support just in case. And your kids are a valuable resource because it's, especially with the way the economy is going and this is this. They, okay. Can you find reliable here? A reliable workers. That's what I mean. You go to Texas, you see all kinds of restaurants and businesses because they start

early, they start training on early. Okay. But also I wanted to kick it back off her back and said they can work up to 240 hours per school used to be here. Okay. On an average, I think at greenhouse the kids are working four hours a week. Okay. So four hours a week. With work, work based learning experiences, they're averaging out about 60 hours a month. Okay. It's not a lot at all. It's not a lot at all to give them that little taste, but it's so much to them. Oh yeah. For them to actually work. It's so much.

Speaker 1 (00:32:31):

Okay, and I, I'd like to add, just to let you know, cow has a policy that until a student has

Speaker 3 (00:32:39):

been given what we call past what we call a work readiness assessment, they will not work online personality. Mr. Warren, this is something you'll have to figure out how logistically, how are we going to work this out? Yeah. We're not going to send them off and say, Oh no, there would be no success. The point is, the point is the program is to teach them to work and we do a lot of things in the classroom at first, but then we have to learn to generalize those skills with the community so we wouldn't, they wouldn't be successful if we just said, okay, you go to subway by [inaudible] checklists, checklists, checklist. Different people have to sign off on it. [inaudible]

Speaker 3 (00:33:37):

so they don't, they don't work alone until they pass the test. And you are one of those signatures and the number one on that list, it doesn't matter. They could pass all 2024 a 25 things. But if they don't pass safety, they don't pass. And yet safety is our number one concern and they will be constantly monitored. The teacher has to be on the ETA, which is the vocational training agreement side. And also the parents. I mean my

parents, my teachers, even the bus drivers as the bus drivers sometimes feel they're not responsible. It's a hands on approach is a hands on approach. And I have two sites right now. They don't want anybody else. But those kids, because those kids do their job, which is Applebee's and cc's here on times a 100 times romance for road. I mean they did fab elucidating daddy smells so good that I didn't even start [inaudible] but they did such a good job. Such a good job. Any more questions you guys have? Yeah.

Questions. Okay. We had addressed that. The SSS, the benefits or whatever. It's not us. It's there. We can move you up a fast process. So definitely [inaudible] I have a service that allows [inaudible] for a worker to be able to keep him after school. So is, is is, um, will that be able to pay? He has to be able be in school until

Speaker 1 (00:35:38):

he's 21 ish to be able to keep those services before he would go over to another service. So, um, it bombed. I keep him in school. This can continue. It's all cool. I don't think, cause he, right now he's 18, he's 18 that, because I know that with, um, this is two years. So if you started him at 18, yeah. Um, we will have to revisit where he is like, because like some kids that have, it's a two year program and so they start their junior year and they're supposed to finish up in your senior year and if they, you know, some kids got ran to independence as much longer than other kids. So the, what we've done is with some kids as they start their work based learning experience, you know, working their immunity that second year and because they need a lot, a lot of practice, we continue with another 240 hours in year three. Okay. See what I'm saying. So in other words, we can discontinue these experiences for them. So yeah. I mean are we going to kick him out?

No. Does he? But we'll, we'll just have to figure out what, what it looks like for him.

We'll have to individualize it for him. Okay. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 (00:37:04):

But I have had people use that support to get transportation. Well, I mean that's the thing. Ideally, ideally [inaudible] to what's called the rehab. There's two sides of LRS, my understanding in school. But for this service they have to be in [inaudible] for this [inaudible]. Okay. I would definitely talk to [inaudible] the middle of changing [inaudible] cause people still have PCAs outs and they're not school So you needed, I would talk with like what happens after 21 okay. I tell her about it. So you have whoever that she can get information about it and why and you know how it goes.

Speaker 1 (00:38:09):

Do you have a card for your counselor or other contact while they're discussing? Let me tell you what's going on with your diabetes. Are we actually doing the eye thing right now? So the only thing that's going on with [inaudible] on the IEP that says my child is going to apply for these services that's overdue and it's going to go in that agency column on the, on the transition page and it's just going to say we're for capital works and that's truly all we're doing. Because like I said earlier, we don't say why did you get accepted at LRS DOE. LR is going to walk through the door in a minute. Mr. Vaughn, who's the regional manager, and then you guys are going to start filling out some paperwork to block LRS. Does that make sense? And then if you finish w what what happens is, what I was telling this mother earlier is there's two sides to LRS.

Speaker 1 (00:39:03):

One side is this side that you're experiencing right now is called 3s preemployment transition. The other side is what's called vocational rehab. And that's all. When you finish all this stuff, they can move into that side. So once we get them through these first two stages, they, when they leave us, when they leave Catos schools, we're good to move on to that next step. They'll move and slide on over into that both grade side, which will be a good transition for them. By that time, you guys will be familiar with LRS, you'll be familiar with vendors such as the agency that offers the LRS can't do this all by themselves. They have to hire companies to do it. And that's what else? That's what it is. See the same vendor, they come to me and there's more than one vendor. We're just, we've chosen Bipsy and we're also start going to start working with another college. So the good thing is once you finish these preset stages, you will be able to roll in [inaudible]. You guys will be set up? Yes ma'am. That's fantastic. They signed up. They could be. We'll have to check and make sure [inaudible] is included in those services. Okay. Do you, do you learn to live the light of day?

Speaker 3 (00:40:40):

That's a great question.

Speaker 1 (00:40:42):

And what, what I would recommend you do is to talk this, this guy, just say you know one on and giving me information and tell you whether the [inaudible] included on the service. [inaudible] stands for pre employment transition services. In other words, you're in the hallway. Here's some skills. [inaudible] that's a good one. Very good question. Very good Russian. No [inaudible] is well, is that good job you actually

[inaudible] because if not they, they don't provide that additional transformation would redirect. [inaudible]

Speaker 3 (00:41:47):

[inaudible] who else? [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] don't worry about [inaudible]. Okay. Raise your hand if you did not give an application for your child.

Raise your hand if you need a pencil or who else? I'm sorry. Okay. Why are you filling out your application? I'm gonna let this young man do some sale. [inaudible] Vaughn

Speaker 4 (00:43:12):

and I'm worked with Louisiana rehab services and what we do is help people go to work and we are, uh, I appreciate your patience with me this morning. Thanks for coming and being an intern interested in us. It's our honor to be able to partner with, uh, South wood, uh, and also with the Caddo parish schools, uh, to provide the opportunity for you to have what we call pets or pre EDS or pre employment transition services. And what that means is, is we want to try to help you get the skills you need to be prepared to go to work and, uh, have a job. Um, our office is located at 1525 Fairfield. We're in a state middle-man and our whole purpose for being is to help people go to work. We're judged on how many people we can put to work. So that's how we know if we're doing our job or not.

Speaker 4 (00:44:12):

Uh, so the opportunity, uh, before you, uh, is to participate, uh, PNL, a program that offers both some classroom instruction, what we call job readiness and helping you kind of know what's out there and kind of expect, uh, to see what's going to hit you, uh, what employers are looking for. Uh, and one component of it that we're really excited about is

called a work based learning experience. And what that means is, is, uh, hopefully we can provide opportunity for you to go to work, uh, to get a check, uh, get a paycheck and if, again, to develop the skills necessary to, uh, get a job and keep a job. Um, you know, one, one thing, uh, in working with our program inflation, uh, that we found, uh, it's very helpful to have somebody that can go through, I actually with job, uh, see what it is.

Speaker 4 (00:45:07):

It used to the, uh, task at hand used to other people that are working there. Um, and so that's a good opportunity for us to have. Um, there's, you know, the, the good news about this program is, is no cost to you and it doesn't cost me anything depending on how much you go to work. Um, you know, when you, when you get out of school, when you go to work, if somebody receives a social security check, the amount that they work, it may affect those benefits. So before we do anything that's gonna, uh, have any kind of affected all of those benefits, we can put you in contact or if they benefits planner, sit down with you and say, okay, my check is \$771. If I go to work over here for 10 hours a week, this is what it's going to do to it or not. But that way you can make the best decision. Um, so, um, once again, in short, I'll be around, uh, answering any questions you may have. Uh, but I just kind of want to tell you kinda overview of the program and makes you know that I appreciate your attention. Preciate your interest. We're looking forward to working with you, help you go to work. Okay.

Speaker 2 (00:46:30):

It just adds, I'm gonna piggy piggyback off of what he said. Right now, probably this school year, they're just going to be doing the pre ed part, which is the pre employment training services. Okay. But for a whole year is normally preempts and weevils that we

lose is work based learning experience where those kids are actually after they take an assessment and all that stuff and we have to approve it, you have to approve it. Then we say, okay, you know what? They can go, Oh, with supervision with the teachers and other support to work at Applebee's and wipe down tables and wash and wipe down windows. Okay. Go ahead. Since we're actually right.

Speaker 4 (00:47:15):

mid-March [inaudible] ideally what? What grades are we looking at here?

Speaker 2 (00:47:23):

11th and 12th these are a lot of credits.

Speaker 4 (00:47:26):

Okay. Right.

Speaker 1 (00:47:30):

Gotcha. Okay, so probably would, typically what we do is we do two years, one whole year of classroom work in one year of legal work that work in the community. That way we make sure they're nice and red. No, we don't. We don't want to take the chances and remove it. Safety is of the utmost concern. And so, um, because uh, they're going to meet there, they could be leaving at the end of the next year. What do you think? Like around the January they would start a weeble normally. Yeah. We would shoot for after Christmas break to start doing some money, you know, dabbling in the community, working maybe once a week.

Speaker 2 (00:48:16):

But mind you that Ms. Jordan might, uh, since this, she will be new to this, start a BTA somewhere. Yeah. You could do that Ms. Jordan. You could go as [inaudible]

Speaker 1 (00:48:30):

yeah. Do some group work and that, that would make them very familiar and as you could also, one good thing would be to maybe start some, do they do any kind of vocational training on the canvas itself of most of these go to career center or, um, programs at anything? Um, but we don't have anything here on our campus. We'll have to go off somewhere to do any work in the cafe. I work with the janitorial staff. They will in the front office, they work with the grounds. Anybody interested in it? We want some kind of landscaping or y'all like flowers, plants, cut the grass, anything like that and [inaudible] yeah, yeah know you can, uh, you can, you can make a lot of money starting your own business. Cutting, cutting lawns. Okay. Um, I have a, I have a couple of kids over counting the three that are starting to work at, um, Lex plant farm. Do y'all have concerns? Are y'all familiar with that? It's a green house over, off of behind LSUS. And then another couple that are starting to Akins nursery right there on, uh,

Speaker 2 (00:49:42):

on miss Kings. Okay. Had a great crush. Then these two parents here have seniors, they're graduating and Matt, so I told them they're probably still utilize the pre-amps and they already have a case and go here. It'll be for, you can go ahead and sign for this and we'll just kind of what we call the transition into a, uh, a case with us. Um, and so yeah, we, yeah, we'd go to work. Remember what I told you? That IPE individual plan for employment, whether it's, whether it's working or either some type of education or vocational training, that's still gonna be your funding source. Okay. Don't eat.

Speaker 4 (00:50:28):

Um, do you just look at going, uh, say a job job in our own little test nations, but there's different roads you can sign. So one road might be going to work or learn to work skills, another [inaudible] college training, technical college, a associate degree, whatever we call training. And it's over here and actual work over here. Either way we can, you know, that's a possibility for us, but our ultimate goal is to end up with jobs higher. We get there. Uh, it's a gift for everybody, but that, that is some opportunities. Yes.

Speaker 1 (00:51:08):

I'm just questioning other people by question. I have someone who has a business that would be interested in being involved with this and, but they had questions about things like insurance and find out more information. Can you give me that today? Okay.

[inaudible]

Speaker 4 (00:51:31):

we, we can have, uh, you know, we really have, in Louisiana rehab services, we have really two customers. We have, you're our customer in businesses. Our customers where, uh, your business knows about business. Um, we, we want to get somebody matched up with the best job. Madison thinking get so weird. You know, we have the business side of the ENA, uh, training side. So yeah, that'd be, that'd be time.

Speaker 1 (00:52:00):

And this is, um, custodial work and lawn part. And so yeah, I just, I want them to have different choices. I mean absolutely cause not everybody wants to be and I know that. That's a good, that's a great point. Ms. Jordan, you guys have heard as a parent, Joel [inaudible] using sample of [inaudible] tables and Applebee's and teach us pizza. I want you to know that one of the very first things we do when the kiddos enter this program is

we'll do what's called an interest in assessment. We try to figure out what I like to say, where you want to be when you grow up. And that weight Bipsy comes in a bit. She starts with the first, one of the first things, they alone what? And then we start looking at the roads like this, talking about the road that it's going to take to hit up that Hill. Okay, and why? I think it's important to remember when I was in high school, you know, I worked at a grocery store. We all have those jobs that teach us how to work, and so while we're going to shoot for your child's interest, we also have to remember that sometimes we're limited. We can only work in the businesses in the community that asked that when it's coming, it would be that even though your child is interested in grooming animals, he ends working at subway.

Speaker 4 (00:53:27):

We'll try to go get an animal Greg in place, and hopefully we're successful in getting an animal. We already have one on board, actually, restaurants, horticulture, landscaping, so that's three of the businesses that industry fields that we've managed to secure or so far, one of the things go,

Speaker 2 (00:53:50):

Oh yeah. Oh no. I had a parent that needed to leave. I first of all want to say thank you for filling out the applications. [inaudible] round of applause. [inaudible] heard, everyone has signed the IEP, correct. Ms Julian went around, Chuck has all the applications, she's going to make the general state work.

Speaker 4 (00:54:11):

We're trying to pray today.

Speaker 2 (00:54:16):

We're gonna make a general statement on IEP or in, do we have any problem of anyone that do not want the agency to get a copy of the IEP? Okay. So he's going to put a statement on there. I'm going to work with mr. Uh, Geronimo and also Ms. Jordan. He's going to get a copy of the IEP and they never hear from Ms. Jordan when we're going to start. Okay. And I thank y'all so much. [inaudible] we all talk a lot.

Speaker 4 (00:54:49):

Basically me, one thing we hear from employers, uh, you know, we, we have, we have, um, a lot of employers that we talk to and here's what they tell me, Chuck, I need somebody that'll come to work. Somebody that will do their work then was here. If somebody that could help make me money. And so those are the main or some of the main things that employers are looking for. Um, it's easy enough to say sometimes, Oh, I don't know how to do that job. I don't know how to do that skill. You've go, yours are very willing to train how to do the scale. So things that they can't train for, you know, we're talking about today, the work of our instructions to working with others. And so, um, you know, we want it, we won't get started doing that. Um, whatever job, if we start doing for the workplace, that's not going to be advice forever job, but it's just going to be a job to get you started to get used to, you know, going to work to, uh, uh, followed instructions and getting along with others, things like that. So that's the good thing about this, um, about this program and teaches you your actual skills and actual things that employers need, uh, in order for somebody to be successful.

Speaker 2 (00:56:16):

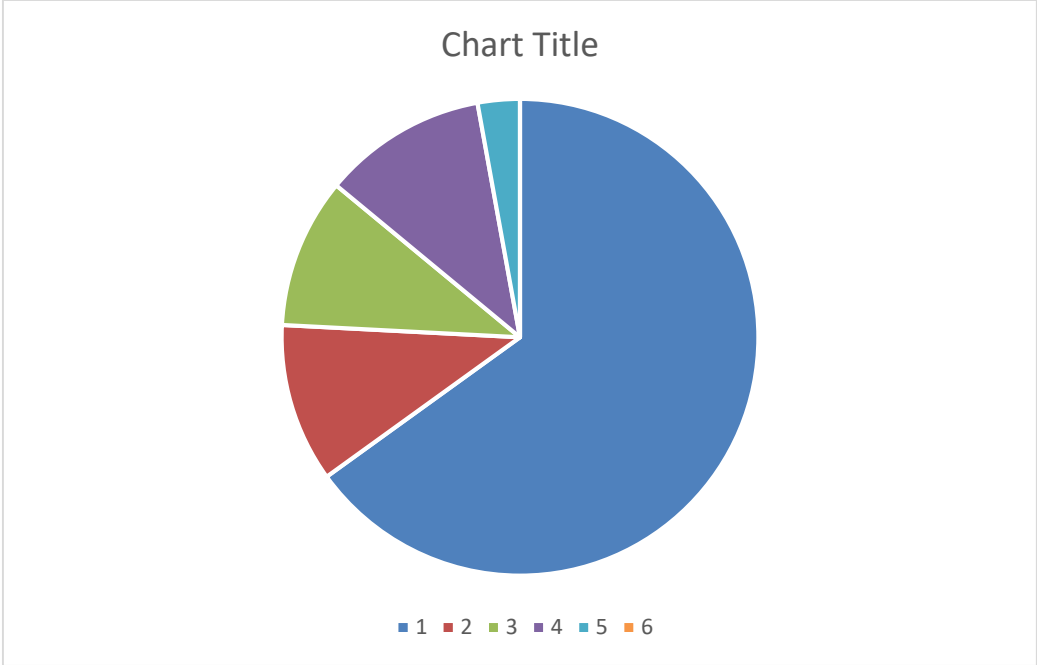
No, basically don't, uh, use it. No way.

Speaker 3 (00:56:25):

Jordan. We know that you're working, you know, you have busy schedules now, you didn't have, um, okay. Uh, so basically Phil has his application. I know he's happy as a Lark because you're all, you got sewed up and we'll make sure he gets a copy of the IEP if there's any other issues, but you're free to leave. Is there? No, you're interested. Now I have the forms. Oh yeah. And y'all, if you participate in her research, there won't be any identifying information about your student or about you or about me at all. There'll be assigned a number and that's it. But she just needs as many people as possible to participate because she's trying to improve this process for everybody in the parish. She's trying to take her research and say, this is what I've learned and this is what we can do to make transition better. So I encourage you to really think about participating with her. And if you have any questions, just feel free to ask. Yeah, and I have to fill out the other information. [inaudible] [inaudible] thank you again for [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] we have to make sure we don't put [inaudible]. I love your picture. Don't worry about, and [inaudible].

APPENDIX M

FIRST MEETING TIME ANALYSIS



Speaker		Time (m)
1.	VOTAC	34:32
2.	SPED	05:43
3.	LCC	05:24
4.	LRS	05:55
5.	Parents	01:31
6.	IS	00:00
TOTAL		58:59

APPENDIX N

PARENT 1 INTERVIEW 1 AND IOTAS

Parent – Interview 1

Speaker 1 (00:00):

Okay. So I guess what my real question is not just that particular meeting, but even any IEP meeting that you've been to. Do you feel like you've gotten enough information about transitions and vocational services?

Speaker 2 (00:18):

No, I have not received any. No. They asked me what I'm going to do when he finished high school. And, you know, I say, well, I'm still searching. Uh, I really don't know what's out there. That's the reason why I was searching. And I had a couple of friends that was helping me out that was also broken. But, uh, like I told him, if he's unable to read and write, I don't know. I don't want to put him in a position where they take advantage of it. Cause he goes to a summer camp every summer. But with your sent indicate, if he hadn't been, cause he used to be in social and active, like all the time, he's a social butterfly. So I mean, he really is, but that's the only thing, but I never, nobody never asked me any information about these are programs that they can do after they finish school or nothing.

What grade is he in?

Speaker 1 (01:18):

He's a senior this year. Oh wow. Okay.

So is there any, is there ever any outside vocational providers at your student's IEP?

No. Right.

Do you feel like one meeting a year is enough to keep you informed about what vocational training and services or your student is eligible for?

Speaker 2 (01:46):

No. No. Ma'am

Speaker 1 (01:48):

Okay. What at this moment would be the most helpful to you in understanding the services that are available in the process for getting them,

Speaker 2 (01:59):

Um, a sit down face to face conversation. Uh, someone talking to me, you know, having materials presented me, you know, the information to present to me about, you know, what's available for the kids. Um, and everything that, you know, something that could help me get a start as to what's at there. Because like I say, I've been to, I go to all these IEPs and I've never had an encounter with nobody talking about this next step after they graduate has food or anything. So I think the IEP isn't, it could be more informative of when it comes down to the spatial leakage. Okay.

Speaker 1 (02:39):

When do you think would be a good time or age for them to start informing you?

Speaker 2 (02:52):

Uh, when I get into high school, because then you come up on the last part of this school year, so cause you a lot of parents going to need something to do with their kids, the facet at home, especially if they can't work and they can't be there by their shift as to what's out there, you know, the like I'm a nurse, so I have a model of a violence or some of the stuff. They fact that because I deal with it. So I think that's the that's one they should ask for stored in high school. So, um, I mean,

Speaker 1 (03:29):

Is there, like you said, because of your position in your job, you're aware of, of things that he might could do, but do you feel like everybody has that advantage?

Speaker 2 (03:42):

No. No. Ma'am I have some things that talk to me about it. Ask me, what are you going to do with you when they graduated high school? You know, stuff like that. They come to me as a is what is he going to do? What is he going to do for the summer? Right.

Speaker 1 (03:59):

So what do you think would be the best thing for the school district to provide parents with so that this is something that's understood and laid out.

Speaker 2 (04:17):

Okay.

Speaker 1 (04:17):

And it's not just thrown at them in one meeting. Like it was last year,

Speaker 2 (04:22):

Right. I think, you know, dealing with special needs, then I think they need to have a separate meeting with them (the students) because everything they get up there and they talk about, I know they want to include them, but I just feel like the kids that are in the same classes need to have a separate meeting to discuss other options for them that, you know, that's available to the parents and it needs to be somebody that's on hand. That's able to present that information with understanding, telling us when it's available, when do we need to apply? And you know, that's right. Okay.

Speaker 1 (04:55):

Is there anything, cause I know, uh, cause I spoke with SPED1 that, uh, your student's IEP is coming up this fall. Is there anything you might do different at this next meeting than you've done in the past?

Speaker 2 (05:13):

Um, sometimes I have a daughter that's an educator, but she's in Texas and so I have her and my, I actually have two daughters. So sometimes they go to the meetings with me and they kind of like some that I might leave out, they pay attention and listen, they kind of pick up on it and voice, well, mama, what about this here? You know, I just feel like as the IEP is, especially with him being a senior, somebody needs to be available to present some things to me as far as what he can do come up on his last year at school. Right?

Yes. Right,

Speaker 1 (05:48):

Right. And those are all my questions. Is there anything you think is important that you need to add?

Speaker 2 (05:55):

Uh, by the availability of, um, resources for him, uh, completing high school, uh, anything they have to offer for him that after high school, you know, so I think that, uh, right there should have been presented my son in the junior year. So we can like get our resources straight as far as trying to get things in order and okay. So what am I going to do with them besides like he goes to camp and I'm hoping it's open. That goes to school is back open and it says in fact consent, cause I was gonna call them and see what they had available. Cause he goes, he deals with them every year. Wow. Here's ma'am

Speaker 1 (06:38):

Okay. Well I really appreciate it. And um, SPED1 going to ask you to sign, um, the form, allowing me to come to his IEP meeting, but I'll just be there to observe. I'm not, I'm not, I won't be saying anything. Um, if you don't mind and I thank you so much for being a participant in my research, I really do. Um, feel like you had some important things that needed to be said.

Okay.

Thank you so much.

Yes ma'am thank you,

Speaker 2 (07:10):

You have a great evening.

Bye bye

Parent 1 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	I	Other parents ask her for help/opinion about information presented
Green	III	There needs to be more information sooner in a student's High School career
Blue	II	Parents feel that they need informed help/advocate; someone who is on their side, to ask questions/concerns
Pink	II	Students should have a separate meeting, individually, to have programs and services explained to them at their level of comprehension

APPENDIX O

SPED1 INTERVIEW 1 AND IOTAS

SPED1 Interview 1 and IOTAs

SPED1 – Interview 1 9.4.2020

Speaker 1 (00:01):

Okay. Got it. Alright. So I have a few questions based on your, I'm going to read you what you sent me back in, um, April, just to kind of refresh your memories. And then I have a couple of questions. Um, you said I was really excited to see the large turnout about full all, but four parents showed up. That was the first time I'd ever met some of those parents. Um, and they seem eager to participate and I'm glad. All right. So my question for that is, is getting parents involved in participating, is that the big problem

Speaker 2 (00:45):

As a may or problem? Um, I would say that the majority of our IEP meetings, we have no parents come at all. Um, sometimes they will like to participate by phone, but by and large getting parents to school is the biggest issue that I have, you know, and some of it's because of work schedule, so they just can't leave their job. Um, and some of it, I think might be a little bit of intimidation, you know, I don't think it's that they don't care about their kids, but I think that the act of coming out of the school and talking with the teacher can seem a little intimidating sometimes,

Speaker 1 (01:25):

Especially, um, do you think, especially when there's a meeting and they kind of feel outnumbered?

Speaker 2 (01:32):

Yeah, absolutely. Because, you know, there's, there's myself and at least the instructional specialist and then, um, the parents and then it is depending on the needs of the child, sometimes their IB, uh, ape, there might be occupational therapists, speech therapists. So there are there's room with a table full of people and just them out of a lot of peers, I've had bad experiences with schools, especially when their kids are younger and by the time they get to high school, they're just tired and they're discouraged and they're wearing, you know, and it's, you know, it's hard for them.

Speaker 1 (02:18):

Yeah. Right. Your second point was, I hope this program meets the parents' expectation.

It was explained pretty well in my opinion, but it was also explained by people who are trying to get the program started. Um, as a teacher, I'm happy to have any help that I can get. I want to provide something meaningful for these parents.

Do you think this new program, this new initiative will help students more than in the past? And do you think it'll get the parents more involved?

Speaker 2 (02:56):

I think that, I hope it will, but what my experience is, things often sound really good on paper, but then in reality it's different. And so my hope is that this program lives up to what they say it's going to be. But at the moment, you know, that's why I asked them, are there other, her opportunity for work like down tables at a restaurant, you know? And they were like, well, not right now. So that's, that's kind of a red flag in my opinion that they don't have. And they told me to go find places for the kids to work. And my thing is, if it's your program, shouldn't you be doing that? You know, shouldn't that be something that you guys are working on? So I think the idea of the program is very solid, but it sounds like they want to put something on paper. I don't know how well that's going to actually work in reality. I don't want to be negative, but that's the more I've thought about it. Yeah. Yeah. So we'll see at least before, you know, nothing to offer them if they weren't going to sell.

Speaker 1 (04:20):

So in the past, has, has the VOTAC team done anything to try to promote work for these kids?

Speaker 2 (04:28):

Well, um, we have this tie in with, uh, LSUS and Southern university and it's the CELT program, which is a continued education. And I don't remember what the LT stands for, but basically it takes them beyond my classroom. They continue their academic skills. Um, and then they also add in, um, components like a college campus participation. Um, they're able to exercise in the campus, um, sports complex, the education majors come and, and work with them. And, um, I guess practice teaching with them. And, um, they also do some work training, but I don't know exactly what that part of it entails. And VOTAC always pushed us to lead them towards that program. If possible, other than that hadn't really had anything for them to go to after high school. Um, in school VOTAC is in close contact with us all this time, but they don't really provide any kind of job skills, connections. So that's why a teacher to go out into the community and find these things. VOTAC doesn't do that, or they haven't done. Um, captain shreve high school has a program where the go to see pizza and they parked there in the mornings before CCS opens up and they have that because their teacher set that up with the CCS around the corner from the school. So if anything gets done it's because of the teacher does it.

Speaker 1 (06:13):

Okay. So, okay.

Speaker 2 (06:20):

That's tech curriculum with this. They provide us with our unique curriculum and trying to add, and that's pretty much what they do.

Speaker 1 (06:28):

Okay. Um, how, how do you think the team meaning the transition team could work together to improve these kinds of things?

Speaker 2 (06:47):

I think that we are surrounded by a community that wants to help, but doesn't know how. And I feel like we have to reach out to them if we're going to get in and suggest things. I don't think that they're going to come to us and say, Hey, we'd like to have special ed kids come work at our restaurant or our business, but if we reach out to them and say, Hey, we would really like to give these kids an opportunity. Would you be interested in participating or partnering with us on that? You'd be surprised. I think how many community businesses would say yes. Um, and so I think that's something that we can do, but I don't want it all on my shoulders. Like I need help with that because frankly that's time consuming. And I just, there's only so many hours in the day, you know, that, and I just don't have time to do that all on my own. So I think the biggest thing would be support with that. If we ask a lot of times, I think they would say yes.

Speaker 1 (07:50):

Yeah. I know. Um, from a job interview with a different district that they have one person that that's their job is they go around the community, looking for places that are willing to take kids and let them work there. And then that person's also responsible for getting them to that job. Um, so that's something that as a district, maybe we're lacking.

Speaker 2 (08:20):

Yeah. I agree. We need something, someone needs to do that. And it can't just all follow the teachers. We have enough, you know, we already are overloaded, you know that.

Speaker 1 (08:30):

Yeah, yeah. With, especially with, um, all the paperwork for each individual student. So, um, as a team though, the transitional team, do you think they're working together to do all that they can for students?

Speaker 2 (08:52):

Yeah, I think so. Um, I wish that we had more parent participation. I think that's the biggest, that that is one thing that's lacking from the team is that sometimes I don't, it helps me to know what family see in their child's future, um, because their experience with their child and my experience with their child are completely different. And there are things that I see their kids do that they don't even know their kids can't do. And they have issues at home that they deal with that I don't face at school. So it helps if we communicate and know we get a better picture of the child overall. And sometimes parents may think this is out of reach for my child. And then they talk to me and I'm like, no, they can't do this. You know? And they realize that there are more possibilities than they thought.

Speaker 2 (09:52):

And sometimes I don't know what they want for their child. Some parents want to try to achieve as much independence as possible. And then you have some families that are like, well, you know what, there, we're going to take care of them and they're fine. And they don't need this and this and this, you know, everybody has different needs for their situation. **So I feel like having your input or that is what we need.** And as far as the rest of the team, I think we worked together pretty well. Um, I'm able to converse with service providers, like our speech and OT and all of that. And they they're working on and I tell them what I'm working on. And we worked together to try to achieve goals in partnership. Um, and then we, we always work with the future in mind, you know, where do we want the child to go? And, and we always work that goal in mind. So I think that we all do there can,

Speaker 1 (10:58):

Yeah. Okay. Um, okay. So the third thing you said was everyone has an opportunity to ask questions and I think they asked some good ones. I feel confident that we'll have good support from Louisiana rehab. And, but the connection to them is probably the most valuable thing in the whole project. Um, and getting them into the program through Louisiana rehab, you said we'll save time, um, for when they graduate and they won't have to go through all the red tape. Um, how, how important do you think that is that not having to go to through the red tape? And I think I know it, I think it falls in the same categories. You said before that the parents feel intimidated sometimes. And so are they going to jump through all those hoops with the rehab?

Speaker 2 (12:02):

Right. Well, it can take months to get served through LRS. If you're, **if you start there and we provide with our transition meeting, we would give them a brochure that said, here are all the agencies in the community that provides services, good luck.** You know, I mean, that's what we give them. So they have to take the initiative to call up and get enrolled in those programs. The waiting lists are months long in some, for some programs, years long, you know, things like Holy angels, that's stuff takes forever to get into. But for LRS, there are so many things that the LRS can provide these kids, even for the ones that are like college bounds. Like I have an inclusion student who's college bound and they can help with transportation. They help with tutoring. I mean, **all kinds of things that parents don't even know about and it takes months to get in.** So if our kids graduate already into their program, they can seamlessly transition into whatever LRS has in store for them. And they don't have to wait for all that time period in there. There's some of that paperwork has already been done and it's less of a hardship on their family to try to get them enrolled. So I think that is the biggest thing. That's, that's something that I'm really excited about this program.

Speaker 1 (13:30):

Okay. So you, you think the transition team is okay, but maybe one little chink in the chain? Um, pretty much.

Speaker 2 (13:44):

Yeah.

Speaker 1 (13:45):

So what do you think we could do to encourage parents to participate? First of all, and to be more outspoken?

Speaker 2 (13:56):

I wish that we had, I would love to have a no pressure come learn about the IEP process kind of meeting, not just with that, just, you know, but when, when they first qualify for services, you know, in the beginning, but here he let them know what their rights are, let them know, uh, how the IEP process works and that way they, they have some, I don't want to say ammo, but they're armed with knowledge when they come to the meeting and that makes anybody feel better. And I don't like it to feel like it's us against them. You know, parents shouldn't have to fight for services for their kids. It should be given and those kids need it, you know? And there's, I know there's times when we know need stuff and they had to fight for it. And I don't like that, that, that creates animosity and negativity with parents. So that would be one thing that I feel like we strongly need is no pressure. Let's all learn together about this IEP process with parents.

Speaker 1 (15:11):

You know, I I'm, that's actually what I'm hoping this research will do, uh, because I agree a hundred percent that, um, the reason parents don't participate or when they come to the IEP, they just sit there. They don't say anything is because I think you're right. They feel intimidated. And they feel like, um, they're, I don't want to say they're always the least educated person in the room, but sometimes they're not educated enough to understand what's going on. And I, I think if we had a program that could educate them, like you said, early on when the child is first placed in special ed, that by the time they got to high school, they'd be prepared for the transition meetings and would be on board and productive in the meeting, um, to help transition that child into the workforce.

Speaker 2 (16:14):

Let me tell you an experience. I had, I had a child whose mother had always come to meetings. Father never came her parents divorced, and she was living with her father and his mother. And they said she had been living with him for a few years. And grandmother would comes to the meetings. Well, we had an annual IEP meeting where she was in sixth grade and grandmother was sick and couldn't come. So I called her dad and I said, we really need you to come because she was transitioning from elementary to middle school. I needed him to sign something. So he changed. But at the end of the meeting, he said, I had no idea that she got all this help. He said, I really didn't know, said, I think you're going to have to come to these from now on. He had never, it had never occurred to him. You know, what kind of helps she was getting what she needed. And he wasn't scared by the end of the meeting, he was like, I'm going to come back next year, just get them in the door, provide them with a good experience.

Speaker 1 ([17:14](#)):

Exactly. I had a similar experience last year with a kid who, um, was placed here in September and it was her third school of the school year. Um, because they just didn't know where was a good fit for her. And they kept moving her around and mom walked in the door mad. You could tell she was angry. She broke down and started crying. And, uh, you know, I just had to, I literally had to hold her hand and say, look, she's in the right place now. Um, but I think a lot, I think you've mentioned this already, that a lot of parents frustrated with the system early on because of experiences and, and that's probably a cycle we need to try to break.

Speaker 2 ([17:59](#)):

Absolutely.

SPED 1.1 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	IIII II	Parents lack of participation due to intimidation/lack of knowledge
Green	I	Inform parents sooner
Blue	IIII	Help for parents needed
Pink		Students involvement
Grey	IIII	Teacher must go out into the community to get community/businesses involved

APPENDIX P

IS1 INTERVIEW 1 AND IOTAS

IS1 Interview 1 and IOTAs

IS1 – Interview 1 9.4.2020

Speaker 1 ([00:04](#)):

Hi, how are you?

Speaker 2 ([00:07](#)):

I'm good. How are you?

Speaker 1 ([00:08](#)):

Hey, I'm so glad you agreed to meet with me. Um, just to remind you what you told me back in April, you said I was really impressed with the number of parents that showed up. Um, and you thought it was a bit disorganized. I know that meeting was not the usual, uh, because it was considered an IEP for everyone, but everyone was there at one time. So it was,

Speaker 2 ([00:38](#)):

It was chaotic because it was our second time doing a mass IEP meeting. The first one went well because SPED1 and I, we had stations and we were in a bigger place. But at that time we didn't have stations. I, I didn't know, realize that we had that very long statement to write yes. On the day of the IEP. So, and it was just me writing it and then SPED1 get a signature. And I was like, SPED1, let's just do what we need to do.

Speaker 1 ([01:07](#)):

Okay. Well, as a reminder, my research is based on the collaboration of the transition IEP team. And so that's where my questions kind of lead to is like that day, you, you were extremely busy writing, um, and you really didn't have any, uh, vocal participation in the meeting. Is that typical?

Speaker 2 ([01:32](#)):

No, it's not typical. The thing is, um, okay. On that day, what ha what was supposed to happen was I'm going to talk first to the parent one by one, and then we go as a group, but that's the, um, schedule changed because the lady could not stay longer and the guy could not come earlier. So with that happened, we just had to adjust. And the only good thing about that meeting though, is I know all the parents that we had already, like I've met with them at least once in their lifetime. So they were kind of comfortable that I was just like writing, writing and writing.

Speaker 1 ([02:13](#)):

Um, was, was the participation in that meeting greater than what you see individually?

Speaker 2 ([02:26](#)):

Yes, I would say because, um, a lot of the parents that we invited, they have decided that this is it for us after high school. We're not doing anything. We'll figure it out later. But we had four of those students that have refused to sell come to the meeting because this might be something more interesting and they are actually following through with the program.

Speaker 1 (02:50):

Um, can you explain to me what silt stands for?

Speaker 2 (02:54):

Okay. I cannot, I can't even remember in my head what cell is, but I email it to you. Okay, well, that's fine, but it is a afterschool program, but students are still considered Caddo parish students. I'm from age 22, because you know, with their IEP, they can't be argued. We can't hold them up to age 22. They don't want a differences. They are housed in a college campus. So most students that live in our area, South of the area, they go to LSU S and then their homeschool is going to be captain shreve. And then they receive up to a year or two. It depends on ms. Donna minis. She is the program teacher there. She was the coordinator. And I, it depends on her. Last year, we sent three students only to complete the program. One chose to first, they chose to come back to Southwood cause they can't come back. And then they changed their mind after. So they did something on night. I I've lost contact with the parent who were two of the, um, students who went to sell. I think they stayed until the entire program. And then one actually got a job at Brookshire's. So he did not complete the entire same because he already got a job. The main purpose of the program is for them to be more independent and a child.

Speaker 1 (04:17):

When you, um, when you have a transition IEP meeting, do you feel like everyone on the team is participating equally or has enough equal input?

Speaker 2 (04:33):

Okay. Before, like I say, for example, for transition meeting window, we are calming to South would maybe say for some, from middle school to ninth grade, I would say yes, because we have, we asked it was from related service people because they're going to be staying with us for the next four years or six years, but transition meeting for our students from Southwood to the CEL program. It's not that much anymore because usually related services, they all invited, but their input is not being asked because it's geared towards more on than repairing to get a job then living more independently. So, um, the usual person that, um, cost related service provider to obtains is, um, ape. And that's because he wants to tell the receiving teacher on LSU as a, Hey, this is only big health wise is the, these are the only thing. These are the limit for these students. And we make sure that we tell 'em the, uh, teacher, um, LSU is that she knows that.

Speaker 1 (05:38):

Okay. Um, why do you think there's a lack of participation by the parents?

Speaker 2 (05:46):

I think because they don't fully understand what is the purpose of a transition meeting for them? When you say transition, they think like, Oh, it's just another chapter. And we always tell them that, no, this is great Perry, your student prepare your child. It is not to move your child is why aren't we moving them if they're not prepared. So not partly because every time you do, we do it in transition patient, the IEP meeting, they will always say, Oh, what is that for? I was like, this is still prepare your child with the next chapter, I think is the reason why they, if they don't fully understand, what's the purpose of the transition meeting. They just, they just think transition. They will Southwest moving them away.

Speaker 1 (06:35):

And, and the difference is that when they get to high school, it's, it is preparing for them to move away. But it's, there's more steps involved.

Speaker 2 (06:45):

There is when we do transition, it's always more parts. We have the school and then we have what a student will do. And then we have what the parents will do. And we have, while the outside agency went there and most of our students, when it comes to like what they do, because we interview them before the IEP meeting. So that week when we have somewhere to go to, and then when we interview them and they have the meeting itself, they will change their mind. Like, Oh, now I want to work at this place. Then we go back again for high school. The transition page of the IEP is usually what takes most minutes on it.

Speaker 1 (07:20):

Okay. Um, do you think this new initiative, um, with Louisiana rehab and LCC will improve the, the collaboration of the transition team?

Speaker 2 (07:39):

I think so. Because prior to coming back to pedo, I used to work at pathways and we send students to I'm busy in that program. And I really see a lot of, a lot of our students that we thought that they may not be able to hold the job. They are working out until knowledge and some of them aren't even able to afford their own apartment. Yeah. So I'm excited when it was presented. And when SPED1 under principal was willing, we're willing to do it. I was like, yeah, I'm, I'm, I'm all for it too. Cause I don't want it to be, I don't want the graduation to be a dead end for our students, which is sad because some of them, I just want to graduate something of what the first 16 years I've been home. I sent it to 18.

Speaker 1 (08:29):

I agree. And that's why, that's how I got in and got it into this, uh, Avenue for my dissertation was that's that's always been as a special education teacher, even though I'm in elementary school. My thought process has always been, there's gotta be life for them after school. And if we don't, um, provide that opportunity for them while they're in

school, the research shows that they may not ever have that opportunity, no matter how functioning they are.

Speaker 2 (09:01):

I would say though, that, especially in Caddo parish, we are not that advanced yet when it comes to taking care of our students with more special needs, receive appropriate training, appropriate education for them to be able to function independently this society. Because I don't see a lot of them working, I to see and the community itself, like we will, we have the usual workplace that takes them. We don't have awareness. It's not that much yet. I hope we will get there.

Speaker 1 (09:33):

Yeah. Well, let me ask you this, you mentioned pathways and do you think the soft skills that they teach at LCC are, um, that important and relevant to, to this, uh, demographic?

Speaker 2 (09:51):

I would say yes. I really cause. Um, when, when it was explained to us prior to the meeting with parents, cause we had our meeting first, me and SPED1 and the rest of the team and I was really impressed. And the only downside though is, um, I was just a little concerned that they relied more on explaining the problem to us rather than including the parents in the conversation because of independent, when it was processed as a parent, it was the abbreviated version of what we've well we had,

Speaker 1 (10:28):

Well, and I can tell you this too, that, um, the comment I got from the parent was that, uh, she was disappointed that it, it was being brought up in March and they were being told that even before we knew we were going to shut down, uh, for the rest of the school year that they probably wouldn't be enrolled and involved until the fall. And she thought that was too big of a gap of time.

Speaker 2 (10:58):

Not date was actually December because the original plan was to start before the start of the original plan was to start during the second semester. Cause I, I said, mr starts in January, we had a change of leadership at school. Yeah. Our principal got promoted and then a new principal came in. That's why it was implemented because the original target date for us was actually cause the original meeting date was supposedly before we go for Christmas break. But with the change of leadership, it got thrown out there somewhere. And then we presented it again to her waiting so long.

Speaker 1 (11:43):

So yeah, cause the parents said, you know, it's like, you know, having a toddler and say, after you do this, you can have a cookie. And the toddlers just thinking, I get a cookie, I get a cookie. When do I get my cookie? And um, she said, she kind of felt like that with these kids, you introduced to say, we're going to help you get a job and then they're left

hanging. Um, so that was her major concern about, uh, the way the meeting went. Um, and now I see it wasn't, it was things out of everyone's control that determined that

Speaker 2 (12:20):

The intention. Yeah. Cause I was like, even when, um, when the new principal came in, I asked her it's interesting. I can't be waiting until the first semester. It just presented in may. And then we pick it up when they come back as a junior or senior, but Betsy and I forgot the honor team. They wouldn't know we have to do it then. Or I also mean, I think it's the funding issue. So I was like, okay, let's do it.

Speaker 1 (12:45):

Okay. Well, um, I don't have, I don't think I have any more questions. Uh, do you have anything else you you'd like to say about how the transition team works together or

Speaker 2 (12:59):

It was, I don't know about it maybe in the future. What I would do is, and I will, I will implement this once we do another Roundup where this program is, **we will meet with the parents first**, the agencies and then probably after the meeting, we'll meet with the parents individually and make sure that we document everything because it was so rushed because they won't, the agency won't leave if they don't have a copy of the IEP because they have to have those IEP for funding purposes.

Speaker 1 (13:31):

And there was what like 15 kids in there.

Speaker 2 (13:37):

Yes. And it was just me documented it. And I was like, come on.

Speaker 1 (13:42):

Wow. Okay. Well you were speedy writing that day.

Speaker 2 (13:47):

No, I didn't really feel so bad. I was like the only thing that is a little bit okay. With this is I know these parents already fixed. If it was even, it was my first time meeting them. I wouldn't have had it that way because I wouldn't, I would not want parents to think. Like, I don't think because it's a drive by me and he does not.

Speaker 1 (14:06):

All right. So what do you think are the two? What, well, what are you think are the most important things to do when you're having these meetings? Like, um, you know, in what order do you think what's the most important thing? What's the second, most important thing about having these collaboration meetings for an IEP or a transition?

Speaker 2 (14:29):

I wouldn't really go with the way, the usual way to, I don't know if it's just me because I just, there it's. Um, or it's because of the way I operate, but I usually do a school first school. You tell the school to tell the parent, the student and the agency, what they will do in order for this transition to be more successful. And we listen to the input of the parent and they will listen to the other student and then I'll be organization because that day it was organization first ended up carrying decimal. I'm confused because it's too far. And we did not know them yet because if it was SPED1 who spoke first, they would have understood it because he will come from his SPED1's capillary. The wave is your, I explained things. And then we live the agency that school parent, the student, then the agency. But on that day he was the AUC first and **we were not able to hear from parents.**

Speaker 1 (15:29):

Right. Well, and I think too, um, SPED1, speaking to the parents before anybody else does, cause that's a relationship that's already supposed to be established and there, should

Speaker 2 (15:40):

We always do that school first parents, student that they should.

Speaker 1 (15:44):

Yeah. So, um, okay. Well I thank you so much. And um, SPED1 is gonna let me know. Um, my participant, I can't remember his last name. Yeah. There you go. And she said, she thinks his, his IEP is in October or November.

Speaker 2 (16:04):

I think so. I think his is one of those that we have to do soon.

Speaker 1 (16:07):

Okay. I need, um, I need permission to be able to attend that. And his mother gave me permission to do my research through him and it's not, so I don't really have anything to do with him. Um, it's just the adults in the conversation that I'll be working with. Yeah. And, but I will need to be at that meeting,

Speaker 2 (16:31):

Give you a copy of the company person to form. And then you go ahead and call chair. Do you have his's mom's phone? Go ahead and give her, ask her permission verbally then at the meeting, we're going to let her speak.

Speaker 1 (16:45):

Okay. And, um, and then after that, I'll, I'll need to interview everybody again a second time. And uh, and then I don't know how, um, that, that I'll actually, after I interviewed by the second time, that'll be the end of my research. Um, because we're considering that meeting in March, the first IEP and I need to be involved in too. Um, so, uh, after that I'll, I'll be done, but I'm hoping my research will lead to, um, SPED1's, um, biggest

concern was that she feels like parents don't participate a lot because they don't understand and that they, that they need education. And that's where I'm hoping this year,

Speaker 2 (17:40):

Because sometimes when we explain it to them, we explain it the way we understood it, codes to the parent's level. That's the whole

Speaker 1 (17:50):

Point of this is I'm hoping it leads to us as a, as an education community, provide an opportunity to educate the parents on the process. And, um, and she says she even thinks it needs to start at the very beginning when the child is first inducted into a special education, the, the education for parents needs this spurt then.

Speaker 2 (18:13):

Yeah. It's like, how many parents do we have that we'll just sign?

Speaker 1 (18:18):

Or how many that just don't show up? You know? Um, I know it happens frequently in elementary as well.

Speaker 2 (18:28):

Absolutely. That I'll have a really good participation rate from parents. Oh, that's great. That's one thing that's really good because teachers really do communicate. I think it starts with the teacher. Like if, if parents feel like, Oh, I have something, my child has someone is really concerned about my child's education, then they tend to be more.

Speaker 1 (18:47):

Yeah, well I think, but I think sometimes it falls back on that level of education and, um, being intimidated by a room full of people. Uh, I know as a parent of a special ed student, I walked into his transition meeting.

Speaker 2 (19:08):

I don't want for the team to be already seated and waiting for the parent because that's really intimidating when you get in a room and everybody's going to see it just cooked part is away from somebody

Speaker 1 (19:23):

Or the last chair. Yeah. Um, I know my, my, uh, my middle son is autistic in his eighth grade transition meeting. I walked in and there were like eight people in the room and some of them I had never met before, you know, so it even, and I had a high, I had a college education. So even for someone who is educated, it's a little intimidating to have this many people sitting there telling you this is going to happen next. So, um, we, we need to, I know with my students even trying to get them over their fears and their, um,

cause even kids know their own weaknesses sometimes. And, um, getting them over their fear of that weakness is, is often something I have to really work at. And I think parents need that same opportunity.

Speaker 2 (20:20):

Yeah. Because like, if they get around, we are all sitting already with our pain in our hand

Speaker 1 (20:26):

Here, sign this.

Absolutely. Again, I really appreciate you and I'll look forward to seeing y'all soon.

Okay. Alrighty. Thanks you too. Bye.

IS 1 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	IIII I	Parents lack of participation due to intimidation/lack of knowledge
Green	I	Inform parents sooner
Blue	II	Help for parents needed
Pink	III	Students involvement
Grey		Teacher must go out into the community to get community/businesses involved

APPENDIX Q

VOTAC1 INTERVIEW 1 AND IOTAS

VOTAC1 Interview 1 and IOTAs

VOTAC – Interview 1 9.25.2020

Speaker 1 (00:00):

Alright. So the first question I have, As I remember, there was a great attendance for this meeting back in March. Do you regularly see this level of IEP participation by parents and outside agencies?

Speaker 2 (00:31):

Yes, I do. Only because we try to give them the 10, 10 day notice a transition is very important. So therefore is a high, um, a high level of implementation. Okay.

Speaker 1 (00:48):

Are there outside agencies, a part of the annual IEP for students participating in programs like this?

Speaker 2 (00:55):

Yes. I mean, agency would be, uh, Louisiana rehabilitation services, also new horizon that assists with the independent living, you know, for those individuals one day they will live independent. The, and that's a big, that's a big hurdle.

Speaker 1 (01:13):

Okay. Um, do you think more, should be participating more, more agencies? Yeah. Or outside people that could be a part of the transition. Do you think there are more, that should be there

Speaker 2 (01:31):

If I had my way, I think mental health, um, I think our students should take ownership of their mental health issues and the medical issues, but due to HIPAA, it's very hard to get medical providers, uh, and also mental health providers to take a part of it.

Speaker 1 (01:52):

Okay. Let's see. Okay. Alright. The next one I had was why is it up to the teacher to find job training for students? Um, technically,

Speaker 2 (02:08):

Uh, the teacher is not their primary job, but the it's beneficial for that teacher to know their students compared to an outside agency when they're spend the majority of their time in the classroom. Right now VOTEC work collaboratively, co elaborately pronounced. Okay. Color in collaboration. Okay. They work in collaboration with, um, with a new program that we implemented, uh, which is caddo works. Uh, also we work in collaborations with our teachers and also outside vendors.

Speaker 1 (02:52):

Okay. Like for instance,

Speaker 2 (02:53):

Okay. Let me give you some examples. What you saw was LRS, which is the funding agency, whether that funding agency also have vendors that work to give students transition services, and also which we call weebles work based learning experiences, and that through that work based learning experience, those students and those teachers get, um, onsite instruction on how to work certain jobs. So we do have vocational experiences where the student that's in transition get work based, learning experience, and then it can transfer it to a regular paying job.

Speaker 1 (03:42):

Okay. And those vendors come to their schools.

Speaker 2 (03:45):

Uh, let's see, **we do have two vendors that teach our Caddo schools**. Uh, we just implemented about three years ago, GOHS was our pilot program and it's called presets. There's two parts. I kind of mentioned four mentioned about weebles. Preempts is preemployment transition services, where they learn about how to, uh, open up a bank account, why they need a social security card. We make sure they, uh, getting an ID. They also have a curriculum. We do have a curriculum through Caddo parish schools, which is called transition for new unique transition. I believe you are an elementary teacher. So therefore you're not privileged to that, to that, but yes, it's up and it's running smoothly. But due to COVID, the work based learning experience has, is Neal right now. Right? Because they can't go out in sobriety and start working, but we are still implement the period sport, which is the preemployment training services. So, so this program

Speaker 1 (04:59):

Has that they were trying to start at SHS has just run into one hurdle after another, basically, because, um, IS1 told me that originally the meeting that was in March was supposed to have been held in December, but they got a new principal. So they had to back it up. And then everyone at that meeting is sitting there saying that, you know, by the fall their kids should be getting job training and hands on drop job training. And then because of COVID, they're not getting any.

Speaker 2 (05:30):

No. Wow. And we just counseled caddo works weebles, which is the work based learning experience. Now caddo works, preempts. SHS is up and running. Uh, I got an email today with the students that did not graduate. You see, that's the sad part, those kids that did not that graduated they're to just be on a regular vote rehab, um, uh, something, uh, well, a vote rehab, vocational plan IPE. We call it an IPE. Once they transition from high school, you know, all through their elementary, middle high school year, they had an IEP IEP, I E P individual plan, individual educational plan. Right. But

now vote rehab, give them an IPE individual plan for employment. Oh, okay. So that individual plan for employment could consist of on the job training. It could consist of going to a two year college, four year college of vocational college. So it's a lot that's out there, but we're trying to bridge that gap. Right.

Speaker 1 ([06:55](#)):

So anybody who's in the unique curriculum has this art,

Speaker 2 ([07:01](#)):

You knew about it in the unique curriculum. Anyone that has a five Oh four plan, anyone that's mild moderate, it doesn't, it doesn't is anybody in special education, special education.

Speaker 1 ([07:12](#)):

How aware are people of this and are they utilizing it?

Speaker 2 ([07:20](#)):

Well, basically I came from the, um, state and federal sector, even though I'm a certified special education teacher. Uh, I had a son and I do have a son with a disability and he chose the route for LRS to pay for college. He's a social worker. He's working for McKinney Beto homeless program. So he chose that route. I would say for region seven for our region is very, um, there's just limited resources. I worked the whole region as a transition facilitator. And could I get to over 400 or 500 schools and region seven? Of course not. Um, most transition specialists and most special education programs do have a transition component. And sometimes it's not that hand over hand or that face to face showing you how it works. You know, normally everybody gives you that brochure with the list of all the different agencies transition really doesn't start and to middle school.

Speaker 2 ([08:34](#)):

Yeah. 14. Yeah. To 14. So you're looking at, in an ECE child, cause I can get on my soap wagon to me ECE, you go to school throughout your elementary, middle high school years. You need to know, well, what's next for me. And that's why I always advocate, you know, what are you gonna do with this moderate child or this child with Asperger's that has reached the pinnacle of high school because sometimes the maturation rates eventually catch up and they need to have a plan. You know, back in my days we had a five year plan. You know, when you sign that five year plan contract, you got to know what classes and courses you were going to take, but what was the actual pathway to some type of tangible of vocation, right? And it's hard for a child that has, that doesn't have a disability. Imagine for those that do have a disability.

Speaker 1 ([09:37](#)):

That's what I'm thinking. How aware are not just the students, but the family supporting these students of what's next.

Speaker 2 (09:47):

I want to say about 20%. Wow. That 20%. If I had to do statistics 20%, maybe no, I was the exception because I knew I grew up in

Speaker 1 (10:00):

Right. You knew the, the, the program.

Speaker 2 (10:05):

I had a holistic approach to it because I know what happens in the school system. I know what happens post secondary. And I wanted to make sure my child got the maximum amount. Cause I never wanted that. I, it wouldn't work as a transition facilitator. Cause you go to those IEP meetings, they, a parent is already overwhelmed with just wondering, is he going to pass the fourth grade or will he receive speech services in high school? Because the services starts to slim down and teachers have done a great job K through middle school to get them to high school. And now

Speaker 1 (10:47):

Do you think some of it may be too with the demographics of our, our parish? Do you think some of it might be attributed to they don't they're afraid that if they get a job, they'll lose that check. Okay.

Speaker 2 (11:01):

Of course, of course.

Speaker 1 (11:04):

Holding on to that check they're getting right now is more important than finding a purpose for that student.

Speaker 2 (11:11):

Exactly. Finding, uh, a transition for that student because mom or MIMO is not gonna be here always. Right. And sometimes, unfortunately I've seen them kind of scale down that their chances to Excel. That's a good way to put it because I, if I keep you in this box and you're gonna stay in this box, you don't progress out of it. You don't progress out of it, especially. That's why he has so many parents at that meeting. They were those kids, those students who are hungry for something next, or what about me, mom? And that's something else you have to sell to them. That fact that if little Johnny doesn't make it, those benefits are still gonna be in place. So

Speaker 1 (12:03):

I think parents get scared too. I know I had one, a few years ago before I got the unique class. Um, that was, he was fifth grade autistic, um, knew some sight words, but really didn't read, you know? And uh, and he had, I think he'd been held back twice already. And so I tell his mom and his annual IEP mom and grandma come. And uh, I said, you know, I think it's time we start, we stop worrying about, you know, trying to teach him to

read and start thinking about life skills and she's so we're given up. I said, no, we're not giving up. We're planning for a future where he can Excel at something and also being happy. And yeah, I said, I said, so we need to start looking at, you know, can he tell time, can he catch a bus? Can he get to a job?

Speaker 1 ([12:58](#)):

And she goes, Oh, as long as I'm alive, he'll never ride the bus. I said, it's not about you. Well, as long as I'm alive, he'll never have to work a day in his life. I said, do you really think that when he phases out of school at 22, he'll be happy just sitting at home. And um, and she just looked at me as if he needs a job so that he has a purpose. He has something to look forward to every day. And grandmother is big in Brookshire's and she goes, I'll make sure he has a job. I said, thank you.

Speaker 2 ([13:32](#)):

It's just common sense. And you know, cause I had to face the reality that, Hey, my son is different. Even at 25, he was over there last night, I'm already drained, but I had to be there

Speaker 1 ([13:46](#)):

Right to me.

Speaker 2 ([13:50](#)):

He has achieved a lot, but he's still need that emotional support. He needs simple instructions and simple directions to be successful.

Speaker 1 ([14:00](#)):

Well, at least you okay. From my perspective, my son is autistic and uh, he went to private school. So there were no, um, accommodations. Right. You know, and he's intelligent, but he's still autistic. And he has challenges because of it. And he got a scholarship to college. Well, he ended up, um, he quit going because he got overwhelmed. He was paid for. And uh, I eventually got, he had a scholarship to centenary and he stopped going cause he got overwhelmed and I didn't know about it until he had already missed all his midterms. He hid it from me. And so I got, he was smart enough to do that. Uh, we got him, uh, where he, um, withdrew. So no grades showed up on his transcript and re enrolled in at LCC. And as long as for two years, as long as he could keep a half an hour to an hour between each class, he was happy.

Speaker 1 ([15:06](#)):

And he graduated with an associates degree with like a 3.6 GPA. Wow. Refuses to go to any higher learning though. Doesn't have a job. Anxiety and depression are what we battle every day. And social anxiety is his biggest fear. So I can't, I can't get him out of the house to get a job. Right. And I never had that support anywhere along his education track to make sure, you know, and I've tried, I've tried Louisiana rehab and um, he didn't qualify. I tried calling, uh, what's uh, it used to be a part of C bark, but it's called something else. Now it's a vocational thing over, off to Ola somewhere.

Speaker 2 (15:58):

I'm not sure I've been out of the game. I called them.

Speaker 1 (16:01):

Then he didn't qualify for that because he'd never been in the system. And so, you know, and he's a little older than your boy, huh?

Speaker 2 (16:08):

27. Yeah. That's what I was gonna sell her, had a job. That's what I was going to say because, um, I was just Jay. Who's not, he was just, he was one of those that were fortunate. Okay. Well you knew though, I knew what to do. This is Jay. He was at not Asperger's PDD pervasive developmental disorder does me graduating with my master's in education. He always that's my little, that's the lawyer. Now that's a ginger ale. He goes, went to Evangel. I'm thinking if, because the trail is 26. So your son is older a year older, a year older

Speaker 1 (16:50):

And then have one that's 24 that went to Evangel too.

Speaker 2 (16:54):

Okay. So he probably do know Jay trail. He probably don't. But uh, I mean, this is, this is Jay I'm when I tell you I followed him, I was at the football games and stuff. I actually, I was blessed cause he allowed me to be that third wheel so I could teach him how to conduct themselves around others.

Speaker 1 (17:16):

Okay. So I was, I was cognitive enough to do the same for Nick and, and teach him how to interact. And he's comfortable in a small group, but that he doesn't want that group to ever change, you know? And, um, I've tried. I'm like, you know, what is he interested in? He wants to be a writer. And he writes really well. He's published self published a couple of books on Amazon, but he won't go look for a job. And so we've applied to online with the caddo parish library system, but nobody's ever called them

Speaker 2 (17:55):

And he's never been cut job. He's never, he wouldn't didn't qualify for LRS. Well, they had

Speaker 1 (18:03):

Just gotten, um, lost some state funding when we applied and they sent us a letter saying they couldn't do anything at that time.

Speaker 2 (18:10):

They reapply because they, we have vendors that will hire him. Matter of fact, a lot there that I'm saying, we, I am primarily, I have a, a nonprofit. So I wound up at one of LRS

vendors. I don't do it because doing all of this, uh, where it would be my job as his vendor, if he chose me to go out and placed him, okay. Own a job. Okay. Goodwill is a vendor,

Speaker 1 (18:44):

Good Wilson us. We started at Goodwill and they sent us to LRS and then LRS cut us off. Um, so, um, yeah. And that was back when I think Jindal.

Speaker 2 (19:00):

Oh yeah. Bell had cut everything. Try again because they have plenty of money for transition services. Also what I want to say. Yeah. **And even LRS have LRS is a vendor themselves.** Meaning that Bo I can't think of his name. Jimbo Jimbo will go out and find your son job. Do you know how many people that are that need really? I mean, especially, I mean, even if he just, he likes books, target would hire him just working in the book section he'll he loves me.

Speaker 1 (19:35):

You know, he would probably think he died and gone to heaven. If he could work at Barnes and noble

Speaker 2 (19:44):

And what would happen is what will happen. **I would go train him.** I've did it a thousand times. Okay. This is how you sign in. This is who you report to. This is how you stock the shelves. And eventually I would say the way they pay the company up to 30% are hiring an individual with disabilities. See, you're experiencing exactly what so many other pairs it's spirits. Now that they're older. That's why we're trying to snatch them out during high school, high school. Because once they get acclimated to just playing Nintendo or sitting on the porch and just going, maybe shopping once a month, they don't want to be bothered. They are lazy. Just like any other human being sometimes to a certain point.

Speaker 1 (20:36):

There's a reason I'm into this. Do I wanted you to go there?

Speaker 2 (20:40):

I think, uh,

Speaker 1 (20:46):

The direction, think my research is going to go is just exactly what you said when, **when the parents aren't aware, that's when the whole process kind of breaks down.** Okay. Um, so what, what do you think we could do to better prepare parents is the IEP transition meetings every annually, every year, going to be enough,

Speaker 2 (21:14):

I think what should be done? Starting in a persons. I mean, in a, in a, for a parent, they meet, I think the school district or other special ed center instead of just having annual IEP piece. Cause think about it. There's only one little transition page on that IEP that shows these school steps, community steps and the agency's responsibility. **I think they should have like an annual meeting for any for annual meetings.** Just like what we did a one stop shop starting in that child's, uh, freshman year I'm talking about just like a job fair, you know, a let's have a transition there. And then we have somebody to actually track those, those kids and those parents, even though we track them, but we really don't take that much interest. We S we do take answers, but the agencies are not really invited until that would, until that I want to say the junior and senior year.

Speaker 2 (22:31):

Well, if you look on any transition page, what is the goal? Johnny wants to play football. Uh, Johnny wants to, uh, work on race cars. You know, Jay wanted, what did that? My son, I forgot what he wanted to do, but let's find something that you give that, which is talking. I know you can't really get fired for talking or working with people cause he loves to talk. So he didn't want to be a social worker. I kind of guided him into look, what is something you can do to earn a living? Cause mama. And now I still tell them, mom is not going to be here. What are going to do? If I'm dying, if I die, how you know, you make good money, I ain't gonna tell you. He keeps it all. And that's the only thing I say, you know, you just need to go buy, you had to buy new tires. Imagine if I didn't demand that you save something.

Speaker 1 (23:28):

Yeah. You know,

Speaker 2 (23:30):

There's so much, you know, even once they do make it, what are you going to do to keep your money? Cause you got a lot of vultures out there. Exactly. Uh, honey, I haven't ran out plenty of gold diggers. I said, I said, invite her over for dinner please. Cause he's handsome. Yeah. As well. And he's got a job, a job and a new truck and he has an apartment. That's a goal,

Speaker 1 (23:59):

Right? Yeah. We just have to look out for them all always. So yeah,

Speaker 2 (24:03):

If I could, it's just like, with some of these kids, if I could create an orphanage where we know that the kid would have dinner, something to eat and go to bed, imagine what our society would look right. But unfortunately we don't make the policies and when God didn't make us rich, but yeah, that's what we just needed a transition. That's what I plan on doing. Um, I bring tears to my eyes because they're so valuable.

Speaker 1 (24:30):

Exactly. And that's why my, okay. My research has changed directions a few times since I started, but it was always focused on vocation. Um, and so that's, I guess what, what I'm trying to lead up to is what about the team needs to change to make it better for the students?

Speaker 2 (24:54):

What about the team?

Speaker 1 (24:56):

Um, how does, how the team works together? How the team, well, you know, what, what, what is it going to take in the team process to make the outcome come better for everyone?

Speaker 2 (25:11):

Cause we, I feel as if everything legally we do is already in place. Let me tell you why boom, we have the connection with the outside agencies. Even if the child wants to go to school, uh, caddo has culinary arts. If, you know, just to make it run smoother, I think it should be more active instead of annually. It needs to, we need more engagement.

Speaker 1 (25:44):

Okay. Okay. So I think I asked the teacher when I spoke with her, what, what do you think the weakest link in the chain is?

Speaker 2 (25:56):

The weakest link in the chain is the parent. That would be my conclusion.

Speaker 1 (26:03):

All right. What can we do, uh, in the process to improve the parent partis overall participation

Speaker 2 (26:15):

Or engagement, maybe make it more, um, make the information more available and make the information more appealing. Um, maybe do some testimony, uh, you know, of from parents and also from participants that are thriving, the, you know,

Speaker 1 (26:40):

So maybe educate parents on the process, independent of the process

Speaker 2 (26:48):

Process. Okay. Yeah, because IEP meeting, you have that parent and maybe eight people there and they're overwhelmed, they're overwhelmed. And then even more. So they have been in all these meetings probably for the last 15 or 16 years. And they're

what they're tired. So by the time you're talking about, Hey, let's dah, dah, dah X, Y, Z. They're like, can you just give me the paperwork and sign? You know, they're done.

Speaker 1 (27:19):

I know, even at the elementary level, it's very rare that they ask questions in my experience is

Speaker 2 (27:25):

Especially as your grade level now, first second, like if you taught like some of the lower levels, they have hope I could see it in their eyes. It's fear. By the time they have a child that maybe has repeated two times. Cause at first, cause when I was working in middle school, I was like, Oh my God, this is like a going to a funeral. You know? Cause they've given up, they're praying, they're giving up. And the little boy that I'll do a birthday card for do jail or T but the little boy that was involved with shooting the child, those up a petition or at the apartment, he was one of my students and I know he was moderate. And why would he even have a gun? You know, I always,

Speaker 1 (28:13):

I overheard a para on the breezeway getting onto a boy the other day. And uh, she says, you know, if you just go sit in here and do nothing, you can go back to regular ed and do that. You were already doing it there. She was mature in here to get help so you can learn. So that's not what, that's what you need to be focusing on. Exactly. And I think the kids by the time, sometimes by the time they get put in special ed, because they have been held back too many times, um, they're, they're tired of time.

Speaker 2 (28:46):

We try to try and, and it takes, but you know what? It's just like with this, uh, racism and systematic, whatever, whatever I said it, what works is trying to help that child because I've worked with adults, I've had, I have community based programs. If that adult thinks that's a dollar, you ain't going to change his mind. I don't care what you give them, but you might have hope if you say, you know what, it's hot outside, but it's going to rain. It's gonna snow in about 10 minutes. And that's how I was. I really for re you know, you have some type of something there, but it's not going to work. So I, my vote is more community based programs because you might can't save them off. Lord knows you, Hey, it's just like the protests. You going to find somebody to F it up, just like teachers. You're going to find that one teacher that, that didn't do what they supposed to do on Google classroom. And here we go, we got one canvas so they can monitor us. Think about it. That's what I'm saying. I, this is my third week. I'm like, I'm tired. But think about, so guess what? You try to help that child. And if you can say one or two that you we're gonna, we're going to do what we have to do.

Speaker 1 (30:20):

Right? Exactly. Cause we're teachers

Speaker 2 ([30:23](#)):

We've always done. We do what we have to do look into, you know, I need another pair of hands. So.

VOTAC 1 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	IIII	Parents lack of participation due to intimidation/lack of knowledge
Green	II	Inform parents sooner
Blue	II	Help for parents needed
Pink	I	Students involvement
Grey	I	Teacher must go out into the community to get community/businesses involved
Red	IIII	More community/agency involvement

APPENDIX R

LCC1 INTERVIEW 1

LCC1 Interview 1

LCC – Interview 1

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Yeah, I'm fine. How are you doing? Okay. I'm glad I can finally get ahold of me. Uh, so this really won't take that long and I appreciate your time. Okay. Sure, sure. Okay. So you, you, when you wrote your reflection for me, kinda did it in bullet points. And I have a question for almost every new one. So you said there was a lot of parent participation that day. Um, did it feel like the parents were participating

Speaker 2 ([00:31](#)):

Well participation? Unfortunately for high school students has a low bar of at least some shut up. Um, I've been doing it a little too long. I'm a little jaded. Um, I did, there were some questions and again, it's been so long, but I do remember there were parents there more than two and a group of 10 students, um, as my recollection and I may be wrong, but I do remember there were at least two parents that I believe were at actively asking questions.

Speaker 1 ([01:10](#)):

I think so. I think so. I know there was one towards the end that was asking a lot of specific questions and, um, I never heard somebody else ask a question, but I heard like one of the VoTech teams say, Oh, there's a question. Um, so I think they were kind of catching the eye of a familiar face and responded instead of responding out loud. Um, and, and you're not the first one to say that, you know, there was a really good turnout that day and that was unusual.

Speaker 2 ([01:49](#)):

And you know, the turnout again,

Speaker 1 ([01:55](#)):

No, be honest. That's the whole point of this be, Oh yeah. Be honest. Don't hold back.

Speaker 2 ([02:00](#)):

Oh no, no, no. I'm, I'm, I'm happy to do that because this is my, the way that I see or have experienced is I don't see the three-year-olds I'll see the five-year-olds and the six year olds that are just, you know, character finally figuring out, Oh, this is, this is a real, this is something that's going to affect them for good, you know, earth through whenever, you know, you realize you're going to end up in not just a class, but that class, because, you know, we, there still is segregation. By the time you get certain places and, you know, anyway, it's not, I guess it's not as bad as it was, but, um, it's still, you know, we're going to have to plan around this. Uh, and then

Speaker 1 (02:57):

What I, you know, as they start

Speaker 2 (03:00):

Getting to be middle schoolers and they start having more segregation in, in, in terms of their classes, then I see parents start to say, you know, well, well wait a minute and they can be involved. But then by that time, their kids have been in school since there's three and some of them have had good or at least decent experiences. And they start in my opinion, gross generalization, beginning to trust the system more, some of them, and they don't hover as much, but then they become out of touch with the fact that the system's going to end.

Speaker 2 (03:55):

And then by the time you get to high school, um, and, and it's, some of them even are almost actively have their heads in the sand. And then, you know, there's the falling off the cliff and that there were parents showing up and realizing, okay, this is going to be, this is going to be a real change that it's going to deeply affect our life. You know, I don't understand what every parent and cousin and aunts, uncles, and grandmas aren't involved by the time you're 16. Cause you don't have, you know, if you haven't gotten to a really good place of independence by 16, you don't have much time left. You know, we work with uses three and you still, you know, this you're going to need substantial supports or you're not going to be sitting in this meeting. Um, so that there, during the Workday, it's hard, but you're planning for your child's next steps.

Speaker 2 (05:05):

And that's true of typical students to, you know, go into college planning talk and you know, so often the keynote that doesn't get attended either, but, but there were parents there, there was a concerted effort. And um, I think it says a lot for the school and it probably the teacher specifically, because another challenge that I see cause I've been a teacher I've been a busy teacher, is okay, we got a meeting Friday and they tell you Tuesday, but the parents had to warn their boss six weeks before to get the time off. So obviously there was enough parent communication. That's parents had the time to get there during your school day. Right. And then any showed up, you know, that means the teacher was proactive and teachers are busy teachers. Or if you really love people and people who work with this particular group of the population usually really enjoy their students. Statistically, I don't know where it is. I don't think they're the best paper people.

Speaker 2 (06:16):

It's just, you know, the personality type is a little different, you know, I, I can't tell you how much I missed. I had a TA that was OCD with paperwork and we were a great team. I loved the people. I lived with big ideas and I love systems change. I desperately need a really good secretary and I don't have a lot. I know the feeling, you know, I like, that's not that's, that's not where am I going to mean dumps it just doesn't. Um, I had somebody that just loves making spreadsheets and like we can, would you move down

from Virginia? I miss you a lot. Um, so yeah, uh, the parent that it tells me that there was enough rolling and clicking together that you had an agency school district on the district level and on the local level of the local school level. And you had parents that, that had the time to show up during the school day. Right. So that is good.

Speaker 1 (07:25):

I know when we, we spoke briefly on the phone before you told me that you didn't feel like the meeting was organized very well. Do you feel like all the members of the team or fully participating?

Speaker 2 (07:38):

Well, I think it was organized in fact that they got everybody there, but I didn't know the, if they sent me the agenda beforehand, I fell down on that. Cause I don't, I knew we were going to talk about in general, but, and this is probably a mistake I would have made. Uh, but it's great for everybody to sort of have, this is what we're going to go talk about in this order. And that way you don't have the questions all over the people, you know, I'm worried about what do I have to pay for this? And you're telling me the whole system the whole time I had to just go on and do I have to pay for this extra page? Right. You know, it just, um, communication like that helps. But again, this is a fairly new program and the fact that they had everybody there and they were meeting that was

Speaker 1 (08:27):

Right. And plus, you know, I recorded it as part of my research. The, um, the meeting was over an hour long and looking back at, through the transcripts, I'm like a lot of the same information was said over over, and it was very general information because they were waiting for, I think for kind of like you and LRS to explain things and,

Speaker 2 (08:52):

And LRS didn't show up until like 30 into the meeting.

Speaker 1 (08:56):

I think it was a little longer than that, but,

Speaker 2 (09:00):

And it was a long time. I know we were, we were, we were, um, we were spinning for time cause they weren't there yet.

Speaker 1 (09:06):

All right. So what do you think it would take? Cause like you said, a lot of parents get burnout. As you know, especially if this is a process they've been involved in for 10 or more years, what do you think it's going to take to get all the participants equally involved in the transition plan?

Speaker 2 (09:30):

I'm working with a couple of things right now and I I'm processing, sorry. That's okay. People read less and less anymore. You definitely don't need a dense explanation. I think though you do need some bullets with a link to better information, deeper information. And what I, what I, I deeply want to work with on, um, the caddo works is rolling out in Caddo. Um, putting together, um, as a vendor work prep going into other schools areas and it's going to be to, to swing, reach the rulings and nail a pandemic. Um, it's going to be delivered mostly online rather than in face to face. But I like the idea of having real stories told and, and having YouTube links, you know, like a minute, two minutes, not much more than that, interspersed with facts and um, what I'm, I'm, I'm setting up to start filming him and be able to do a hope is, you know, I am reaching out to some of the teachers that I'll be working with the schools and say, you know, give me some of your success stories and we'll talk interview these people. I want to get successful reads. But I also want to get a point where I paid them to participate in this. Um, I don't believe that that, that we've done an, I hate that our students don't have some of the lookup to that. They have a real story. Right? Well also hate that. We just assume all these people are gonna stand up and be self advocates and later whole personal out there for anybody and not compensate them.

Speaker 2 (11:58):

I think we too often used a lot of people want to, but you know, even those students that are employed, so many of them are still making a really, either working. And it's fantastic. I mean, it's benefits, very few of them are getting well paid, but I'm sorry, what

Speaker 1 (12:24):

It idealistically though,

Speaker 2 (12:28):

If they're okay

Speaker 1 (12:30):

At a certain IQ level, what is the, the reality that they would become a hundred percent self sufficient?

Speaker 2 (12:42):

Um, well, a lot of challenges with that, I think we need to

Speaker 1 (12:56):

Saying they don't deserve fair pay, not at all, but are they going to be in a, in a working

Speaker 2 (13:03):

Because they also haven't seen it. And so that becomes the more they see the people that are out. And you know, some of these students disappear into jobs at the supermarket at

so and so, and 10 years out, you may not know that they were in the napkin folding class because once they're treated like adults, they start behaving more like adults because they are adults. Right. Um, and there's one, couple that I don't know. Well, I, I met them. Actually. My husband was on our church retreat with a mom and daughter and she just got married. Her husband works at Brookshire's Patriots. Look, you know that they have significant differences 10 years from now. Once you know them, you might know something's a little different, but if they're living quote unquote real life. And I think so often, um, I was working with a student the other day and there were four of us working on campus.

Speaker 2 (14:13):

Cause we're such a small, we're not supposed to be on campus, but I've got some kids that with photography, they'll get some hands on helping I'll house because it's really hard to learn some skill of that distance. Well, I had a female student in there, a male tutor, another male student and myself while I was called out for a phone call and the male student went to the bathroom. Well that leaves the male tutor and a female student in there. So we would walk back in the room. The tutor's asking the student, where did you go? And he said, well, I just went out for a minute. Well, you don't tell me, but he kept in later the student, he said you have any, he was trying to check things with himself. And so basically he had a flashback to when he was in high school and you're not, yeah, you can't go outside without telling me where you're going home. And he's just being treated like a baby when he's, he's been out of school for a while now. And it college people don't know he was in the napkin folding class. They don't treat him that way. And he immediately just bristled at being asked where he went when he left the room.

Speaker 2 (15:29):

Um,

Speaker 1 (15:30):

The SPED 1, you know, it was the teacher there at SHS. She mentioned that, um, this is how she feels. She feels that it's left up to the teachers in these classrooms to actually find vendors who are willing to provide work training opportunities for students.

Speaker 2 (15:57):

And I was just wondering, I mean, yeah,

Speaker 1 (16:01):

Maybe I'm wrong, but I, I thought that your organization was supposed to kind of help with that. Is that true? Or how could your organization help with that?

Speaker 2 (16:10):

Sure. I'll tell you what the issue is there as a vendor. Um, we want to provide work based learning experiences. However, um, Louisiana rehab rehabilitation services, what they do is they re so some of it comes down to how the money goes and how responsibility goes. Okay. Um, subway has become a vendor. Someway if they hire one

of our students, they can pay little Johnny and Louisiana rehab will reimburse subway up to 240 hours of work experience training. Great, perfect. And we as a vendor doing premed services, if we find somebody for them to work for, who's a vendor, we get sort of a finder's fee and we follow along and make sure the placement's going okay, all right. 500 bucks to find that kid applies from that. And it takes time and leg and which is drives the teachers crazy because teachers don't have time to do that. That's how we're supposed to be helping.

Speaker 1 ([17:27](#)):

Great. When would the teachers have time to do that? They'd have to do it on the personal time.

Speaker 2 ([17:32](#)):

Yeah. And I know because I did that in Virginia, but, but most employers don't want to go through the paperwork to do the placement, even though they would get reimbursed what they pay the kid. Now we see, went through the steps to become a vendor for that as well. The challenge is that those schools, they will let the students come over to LCC to work. So if Johnny wants to work at the vet's office and we are the employer of record and Johnny goes over there, we can be the pay through for the agency. Right?

Speaker 2 ([18:28](#)):

However it, Johnny is injured well, and the thing is, what will they, what they'll do is they pay Johnny is paid \$8 an hour. We're paid, we're reimbursed like \$9 and 50 cents. So we make literally no money off of that. Because by the time you go through the fee for the people doing the checks and time sheets and your person going out to make sure they're doing their job, that is a wash for us financially. And we have liability on top of it. Now on top of that, the governor's order States that the rule is people have to be massed. It is the employer's responsibility to make sure the employee is safe.

Speaker 2 ([19:27](#)):

Because if you're working at taco bell and people come in to eat and they're not wearing their masks, the manager's supposed to say, you need to put a mask on and be served. Well, I'm not going to manager talk about, but I am the employee of this student. Who's a talk about. And that student gets covered. The liability falls back to them. Wow. So during the time of pandemic right now, we itsy bitsy and these pandemic rules are different than Caddo schools, pandemic rules. We are still not allowed to hire student workers to work on campus. If I can't hire them to work on campus, I'm not going to be able to hand the work off campus. Right. The tutor that I have on campus right now is being paid through Louisiana rehab, but only to work under me. And I have to be there at all times and I'm making sure everybody is around.

Speaker 2 ([20:27](#)):

Hmm. So it's, it's, it's squirly. We can find the people, but we, what we need to develop. And it's hard to do because they can, we're working with several schools. We have one person who is dedicated to that. I have one person who's to be helping out with

helping to find placements, but both of those people are Jairus for pulpit. And I'm dealing with all the students on campus to my, um, what I want to happen. And what is, what is a little bit different and CalWORKs is different moms. The model I would love to see going into the rural schools. If I've got you, if I've got a school, you can't tell me there's not a school that doesn't have at least 10 kids on an IEP or five Oh four. If I could get 10 kids at a school I would dearly love to do is have like, um, an add on contract, like a coaching contract where I partner and train.

Speaker 2 (21:36):

I've still got all the online content I've developed the 64 lessons that we're going to do, or I've adapted them from grant stuff with given credit so that, you know, we've got really good material, the teacher or whoever does it, doesn't have to come up with the material, but they know the kids and they know the employers in the area. And if we're able to do it that way, then I can pay them to what you, that way, if the teacher's having to do the extra work, I can compensate the teacher rather than them doing what they're probably going to do any way to make sure the kids get what they want for nothing. Does that make sense?

Speaker 1 (22:24):

You know, every school district does it differently like that. I interviewed with a different school district. Um, one year that was hiring someone just for, uh, kids with the transition plan. And they wanted that person to be able to have the qualifications. You had to have his, you had to be able to go out into the public and find people were willing to hire these kids. Yeah. And you had to be able to drive a bus because you had to take them everywhere. They needed to go. Um, and this was just one person for the entire school district. But I mean, granted, it was a small rural school district. So it still seems like a lot of work. And it seems like, I don't know, maybe, maybe you have a better grasp on it than I do. It seems like we're, we're kind of been in our wheels.

Speaker 2 (23:23):

It's hard. Cause I there's an interesting, um, one of the, um, or you talked to the lady from lions, you're not, uh, dr. Becker's or Linda. No, I haven't spoken to her. She's cool. And she's, it's a rural area. And the one thing that I love is she is straight in the face of the parents in that we are not going to be able to find your child a job, like any other kid, graduating college. If their parents are not actively involved and really, really pushing it, statistically, it's more likely not to happen. And, and part of the reason I think that she does that and I haven't talked to her one on one about, this is the fact that there's nothing more frustrating than you find this stuff. And then, you know, a guy, a kid on, at a school cafeteria, he was doing amazing thing. He had benefits and retirement and his parents took him out for two weeks to go on vacation. Oh my goodness. Okay. Any, he just started his job. He lost his job right there. I wanted to kill them with my Valor, Barry recording this one.

Speaker 2 (24:42):

But they, the parents still had their heads around thinking they're babies. I'm thinking that, you know, what they do is not real work. Right? Like the people that think that when we teach and we're taking them out to the malls, we're just babysitting. No, they kind of learned to do this. You're not taking them. You're not teaching them. Um, I need to be able to go by them. So I took a group. Um, we were going to a strip mall and we'd said they had had these several assignments and they were breaking out and go into different stores. And, um, one of these kids that I work with was a group home and they found out that we had, let him go with two other peers into best buy by himself without a staff member, actively in the store with an eye on him all to 24, seven one one quarter because of age.

Speaker 2 (25:31):

Wow. We're not allowed to do that in the group home. You know, somebody might take him at which point, literally I turned around and said he is six foot eight, who is taking him anywhere. That was truth six foot eight. Wow. Anyway, um, I think that, that, um, Mmm, I don't know where the balance is. I know that if you're going to place people, if you're going to play students, you need somebody who has deep connections in that community. What I have seen in the past that's offered, sought out of need from some local little schools is, you know, they'll have one thing and this isn't true, but yeah.

Speaker 2 (26:17):

Okay. Oh, friends, hamburgers, whatever it is. But say, Fred's knows that they'll pay these kids for 240 hours. And so they'll provide the training thing, but the minute the kids free with their free hours, they let them go and get another free kit. Wow. I don't like that. No. Um, I understand. And I would be more okay with that. And I I've, I've stressed and ask cattle works to try to place them onsite at the schools. Especially during I said, not we'd have to have an agreement, but if I'm going to be just a pace, a flow through for money, and I'm going to have liability, I need the principal at the school. And that this is, this is under the cover because this hasn't happened yet, but I'm going to need the principal to sign off that he'll be responsible or she'll be responsible for the code inside of it.

Speaker 1 (27:10):

I have of the way things are supposed to be working now through like the VoTech program is that ninth and 10th grade is the Prius though. The training and then 11th and 12th grade are supposed to be work experience.

Speaker 2 (27:28):

Okay. That's not the way LRS doesn't LRS as, um, if your LRS is creates for five Oh four for the higher, but that's not for the more typical kids, those without significant disabilities that senior year both, um, you finish out, you start sort of in the spring, you do want, and then we end you up with the placement. Now the, the, the ultimate, excuse me, to all the assessment kids do at 11th and 12th grade, the Prius does not start in the ninth grade.

Speaker 1 (28:05):

So, okay. Another thing the teacher mentioned was that she thought this new program, um, she thought it would be good because it exposes parents and the students to LRS before grad graduation, because a lot of these people feel like graduation kind of cuts them off at the knees and they're just left with nothing with no support, nothing. Um, that's the clips. So how, how helpful is it? If we start a program like at ninth grade that builds and, and there, and it's connected with LRS throughout their high school experience.

Speaker 2 (28:54):

Um, I saw that work in another state and that's what elements really wasn't paying for anything. Um, but they would, they, they were staffed where they could go to meetings and do things. And the staffing right now is a Bismal. Um, last I heard LRS has like 300 students he's working with, how can you keep up with the, you know, it's what they're there. They'll crank open a clinic case. And I mean, I was important. We're at my ideal for this, which I don't Canada's cat is working specifically with my person who manages that for them. When I was doing it in Virginia, my whole focus was, I want you to get out of AARP thing with, with sort of a binder. Now we should probably do it. I said, Google drive folder or something that they can keep where you've got you, you go over all the things in a well done summary performance.

Speaker 2 (30:21):

When you walk out of school, you should have together somewhere, your reading level, proof of your reading level, your math level, proof of your math level, your accommodation needs. You should be able to understand why you need them and proof that you use them in high school, uh, proving your disability. That is going to be such that you can get accommodations for it in college. If you need to or add a job, if you need it, um, you should have any sort of a copy of any certification you've earned. Cause if you earn it, you don't have a certification. It doesn't do you any good?

Speaker 1 (30:59):

Well, is that something they're going to be able to get through your program certification in an area?

Speaker 2 (31:06):

Um, well, I mean, what kind of services with some, we, we, well, like, um, with we've, we've partnered over the summer with, um, what you would call it. Bowser schools has done stuff where they've gotten food handlers through certifications and things like that. Uh, OSHA, tan, that type of thing. Um, it's not, I haven't been part of that discussion with the high school group. I don't know if they do it through their school, through the tech school over there. Right.

Speaker 1 (31:44):

Okay. So that's at your level, that's at your level at [inaudible] level,

Speaker 2 (31:53):

He has partnered with both your schools in the past to provide that training. Okay. We have not been asked to provide certifications at this point to Catto and I don't know if Catto would have their own people because you know, you don't want to pay for something that you can do for yourself.

Speaker 1 (32:17):

Right. You know, Kevin used to have a huge, um, well, there's a huge facility out on North market in Shreveport that used to be the vo-tech school for Caddo parish for the area. Really? And it, you could, you know, kids

Speaker 2 (32:36):

Northwest Louisiana technicals, it's still there. It's

Speaker 1 (32:40):

Not, it does not provide, it does not provide the same number of opportunities that it used to. It used to be a huge deal and kids could get all kinds of training there, especially kids who didn't want to go to college or kids who, for some reason or another dropped out of high school, they could still go to vo-tech. And, um, I don't, I don't know. I just see, well, I'm gonna keep my personal opinion to myself. Um, so, um,

Speaker 2 (33:19):

There's a dearth of opportunity if you get out of school.

Speaker 1 (33:25):

Right. I think, I think the issue is through the IEP transition meetings, are we providing enough of an opportunity or parents to participate and for them to feel like their voices heard?

Speaker 2 (33:43):

I, I haven't been invited to more than like two of those meetings and I in Caddo. Um, but again, it was a pilot, Epic. They've been invited to some and from what I've again seen in general at IEP meetings, so often so much is it's not done as an exploratory thing in the same way as it could be because people have this amount of time and you get in there and you trip straight through. I wish we had a, and I love to build, I don't know how to do that. And what kind of grant it would take, just, I would love to have, as I'm building the preset stuff online to train the students, I'd love to have a parent education portal.

Speaker 2 (34:40):

I, um, I'm reaching out to the arc. Who's going to be doing, um, supported decision-making training and they know what they want to teach. But I said, I have an Infor, I have an education management system where you register online. And if you're, if you're using government or grant funding rather than charging for the class, and I know there's money out there for parent training, and I know probably 90% of it goes to new

Orleans. I mean, I've never seen the state that they just forget about anything, about the ankle of the Duke. Um, it's true. It's scary. Uh, but we, if there were a, if there were a plan developed with workforce, because we're sick, we're supposed to serve the community. It could be done with, you know, yeah. We'd love make a million dollars of it, but as long as we can count that we're serving people, it's good for us.

Speaker 2 (35:42):

Right. And if you make these units and you know, maybe one unit, if that's where I'm going to me, more videos produced and things like this, that, okay, if you need to find out about, um, benefits for after high school, you know, if I work, am I going to get cut off? We get somebody who has the grant. Who's, who's, you know, I'm the person you have to talk to, to do that. We'll come down and help you. We're going to produce a video and you're going to tell people what you would tell them if I call, but what they have to do now is they have to call on you to wait for them, to call you back. And it's a pain in the butt. You never get through. They should be able to go somewhere online and at least get the initial spiel. Well, understand why they're waiting for you to call them back,

Speaker 1 (36:34):

But are okay. Is there, is there going to be easy way for them to find that help? Because, um, you know, as a parent of a, of a child with a learning disability, you know, I forgot what it was. I was doing one day, but it just, they like go to this website and it just kept taking me around and around in circles. I go to this website, it says, go to this link, go to that link. It says, go to this link, get to that link. And it sends me back to where I started, that that's problematic for a lot of people, I think. And especially people who aren't educated in the system, they don't know where to go, to get the information they need.

Speaker 2 (37:20):

Well, I tell you what if we could, um, partner, we're talking about an interesting thing would be partner all the way up to the governor's office of disabilities. Say on our website, there is one button I need to learn. And if it would shoot you straight over to w w I know that it's, he has some stuff on campus. That's free learning programs. Now. I don't know how they get money to support that. And then that would be another part of your research. I'm guessing, but I mean, we can push stuff like that out. And if you, if you, if you sign up for the, I'm a parent, I want to understand, and then you, you get in there and then here are the modules and okay, what do you want to learn about? And, you know, it looks like a file up there. I need to learn about, um, how to get my child counseling.

Speaker 2 (38:18):

Like there, I need to learn about, um, what w what happens if my child has dyslexia? What w w what does this stuff mean? I got some bad the other day. I never heard of 1903. Cause I got my license in another state, even though I'm from Louisiana. So I came back here and they kept saying at risk and stuff, I didn't really know how he looked it up 1903 says, if they check these boxes off, they have to provide your child with multi-sensory education. In, in any way you use the Orton Gillingham type of stuff, 15

minutes, three times a week. I'm changing my child from one school district to another. I'm sitting there and they hand me a paper and they check this off on my son in January of 2018. And then I provided him with Jack and I started talking to the diagnostician in the new district and like, Oh, well, we're rewriting that. And my head's gone, but the law says this now. Um,

Speaker 1 (39:30):

I've had to do that in another state too. Um, I've had to do that in another state too. I, you know, signed my kids up for school cause we had moved there and um, one of them was supposed to have speech therapy and he wasn't getting it. And we were like a month and a half into school. And so I went in and I was like, why, why isn't he getting speech therapy? It says on his IEP, he gets speech therapy and they go, well, he's not a fifth grader. And right now we have a lot of fifth graders that need it. And so we think that's more important. And I said, well, according to the law, if you don't provide him with speech therapy, you have to give me the money to get him speech therapy. And they called me back the next day. And they said he starts speech therapy tomorrow. I said, thank you. Um, and so it's not, you know, that there is a gap between the education system and parents. A lot of it is parents don't always know their rights. Um, and a lot of times

Speaker 2 (40:38):

Helping families is supposed to provide,

Speaker 1 (40:41):

Right. There's a lot of people are supposed to do a lot. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (40:44):

Recording on.

Speaker 1 (40:47):

Um, but no, the point is a lot of times school systems are banking. I think on people not knowing what their rights are. Oh yeah. Um, so that they don't have to do what they're supposed to do. And that's a generalization. I'm not, I'm not pointing this in anybody's direction and especially not at my employer. Um, but, but it's, it's a true situation. I, in, in my literature research, building up to this, uh, one of the statistics I found was that if even higher functioning kids, like with specific learning, um, who look and talk and walk and act normal, if they don't have a job, when they, they leave high school, chances are, they're never going to get a job. I also know people don't even understand that, right? I mean, I read where, and this is illegal where one guy, um, hunted he's he's, he was from a rural area and he liked to hunt. So he would hunt and sell the meat to people locally. Uh, that's actually against the law, but that was the only way he was able to make money.

Speaker 2 (42:10):

I believe it.

Speaker 1 ([42:12](#)):

Another thing in my research I've seen is how much money the federal government issues, States and school districts annually for special education students to receive services above and beyond the regular ed classroom. And, and it just makes me, it just makes me wonder if, you know, if we got this huge population of people finishing school and I say finishing, cause they don't all graduate, um, finishing school with no, no opportunities. It just breaks my heart.

Speaker 2 ([42:52](#)):

Yeah. We've got, there's a guy. I know that that's, you know, he looks fine. He couldn't pass the math to get what he needed to get. Yeah. So I think he finally, his parents just let him finish with whatever he's been working over at a car dealership. They got a job in the parts department that he's functionally doing right now. And if they hired him for that job, instead of being, you know, I think it's on the books, it's just sort of helping wash the cars and doing grunt work. But their company policy says you have to have a high school diploma or a GED, whatever equivalency to get that job. Well, not many people understand the Americans with disabilities act the challenge that you really need, but do you like to deal with your employer? You know,

Speaker 1 ([43:55](#)):

Another research thing that I saw a girl had, um, completed high school twos in special education, she completed high school with, um, an equivalency thing. It wasn't a diploma. It was a certificate of completion. Yeah, exactly. And she applied to a local vocational college. Um, I think it was to be like a nurse's aid or something. And it was like a two year program. Well, she had already spent a year in the program and had a B average and they call her up and they're like, you know what? You have to have a high school diploma to be in this program. And you don't. So we're going to have to kick you out.

Speaker 2 ([44:43](#)):

You see in the state of Louisiana at this point, all those things come through a community college, the adults and stuff. Right.

Speaker 1 ([45:01](#)):

I don't think a lot of people are aware of the benefits of the peoples with disabilities act. And so that would again be something that I think parents need to be educated in. And there's like a long list of services that they need to be educated in because once kids graduate, you've lost that support system you thought you had in high school and, um, people that's, that's what I'm saying. That's what I'm hoping my research leads to

Speaker 2 ([45:35](#)):

What'd you do? And where you go for help. That depends on which it and the regions are even different. LRS is able to help you all the way over and think and parish in the Shreveport area. But families helping families only goes, as far as being bill, they don't

go over the line. The Lincoln, like their lines aren't even drawn the same way when they pick up this stuff popped up.

Speaker 1 (46:00):

So you've got yeah. Agencies that just reach to a certain geographical limit and they don't go beyond, and then you've got others that reach beyond, but they don't coordinate. I mean, it's um, and I think, I think what you said, like about Chuck being, um, having over 300 people who he's working with right now.

Speaker 2 (46:25):

Oh, that's not LRS, that's one of his workers.

Speaker 1 (46:28):

It's um, you know, the people who we went through, you know, a big deal with our previous governor where he cut a lot of programs and yeah. And I don't think they've ever been updated if, if LRS's office is that overwhelmed, they need more people working there to help people get jobs.

Speaker 2 (46:55):

I mean, one of the challenges is the, what the stuff is, they give you money to, to, to serve people. But then if you can't serve people, cause you don't have enough people to do the case management and they think you're fine.

Speaker 1 (47:09):

Okay. Um, um, my ex husband was military and that just sounded a lot like the military they'll give you X dollars this year, but if you don't spend it all, then we're not even going to give you half of that next year. Um, it's a government bureaucracy. Yeah. And I think unfortunately, the people who are affected in the worst way the most are the people who need the help the most. Yes. Um, Oh, I'm sorry. I kept you on the phone so long.

Speaker 2 (47:48):

No, I won't shut up if you give me a chance to do this

LCC1 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	IIII I	Parents lack of participation due to intimidation/lack of knowledge
Green	II	Inform parents sooner
Blue	IIII	Help for parents needed
Pink	III	Students involvement
Grey	I	Teacher must go out into the community to get community/businesses involved
Red	I	More community/agency involvement

APPENDIX S

PARENT 1 INTERVIEW 2 AND IOTAS

Parent 1 Interview 2 and IOTAs

Parent Interview 2 11/13/20

Speaker 1 (00:01):

Um, I just have a few questions and, and then I'll basically, um, be done with that portion of my research. Um, you said back to our meeting last week that you thought it went pretty well?

Speaker 2 (00:16):

Yes. Okay.

Speaker 1 (00:19):

Um, what type of future plans did y'all discuss?

Speaker 2 (00:24):

Uh, we was talking about, uh, they supposed to be having some people come out there to the scene and address the date, something about, you know, through getting jobs and stuff, if possible, if they can do it. And that's what we was talking about. And, uh, other problems that could be available for him when he graduate or like what? Well, we was me and her was supposed to been talking about that. She told me I'm not in this alone that, uh, they not just on that, him graduate and just do that. But they had some, most of that. They was, uh, working on to get that for them in a graduate high school.

Speaker 1 (01:03):

Okay. She, did she give you the name of the programs

Speaker 2 (01:07):

She did? She did. She said she was going to respect me.

Speaker 1 (01:11):

Okay. So, um, so what did they think he's going to do after next may?

Speaker 2 (01:20):

Well, I've been working on some stuff myself. Like I always be working, uh, trying to figure it out cause like he did like, um, cause I, I remember, I didn't know about the job processes he don't read and he don't write, he can write his name and stuff. And uh, he actually don't read and he always attended a summer camp down at the princess park. Uh, he been doing that for a little while. You know, going during the summer time, then they then come down there and when he had a school on break and stuff, but right now they're closed. They said they probably went open up to phase four. We don't know if going to make it to chase. Cause man, I'd be going back down to phase one. I don't know. I know they found a home put us back, but I don't know. I don't either. And I really don't know, well, none to go with this, but uh, I had been talking to them down at

Prince's park anyway, you know, cause he used to go down there during the holiday breaks and stuff, but with them being closed,

Speaker 1 ([02:24](#)):

What kind of stuff did he do there?

Speaker 2 ([02:27](#)):

Oh, they did dancing date. Uh, took troops. Uh, they did like kick me. They did, they did Dan like teaching them different stuff. They went to like different classes, exercise class. They had teaching the nine to classes where they just did different stuff throughout the center. Different pizza. Diana's how

Speaker 1 ([02:53](#)):

It was more activities than training or anything?

Speaker 2 ([02:57](#)):

Yes. Was noise. Creativity then training. Okay.

Speaker 1 ([03:01](#)):

Okay. All right. Do you have anything that you'd like to, uh, add to contribute to the research or any, any questions you feel like you haven't had answered through his IEP process?

Speaker 2 ([03:19](#)):

No. I pretty much had my question answered. It was more verbal this time with her and coach, but uh, like I said before, everybody might not have the refills resources in the S's that I have with me being in the medical field. I kinda can handle it, get ahead or sometime, you know, we still need that extra push and that help. Cause like I say, I don't know about all the programs I need, but I'm a pediatric nurse theater, but it's not a whole lot. I research when I have kids that come in and people that ask me questions. So I that's how I find out the most. So just my research in it. And when I have people to come in and different people come from different programs and talk to me about the, you know, dealing with special needs kids and stuff like that. And I found out a lot of stuff about that, but the only problem is a lot of the stops at the age of 18 and Dean, after you 18, you kind of like on your own, you get really there's. I mean, that's this just straight phage because a lot of total don't go past 18. I mean, I understand they want them to get a job now in my skills and stuff, but still it's not that easy. Right.

Speaker 1 ([04:36](#)):

Can I ask you one more question? Do you feel like, um, through talking with me about the process and everything that you were able to voice your, your concerns and, and things ease more easily, the second time you met with the teacher?

Speaker 2 (04:58):

Well, I'm going to tell you this. I'm very vocal when it comes down to him. Sometimes I think I'm a little to both and I'd be looking at me like, okay, I really do. Sometimes I really think I'm going into, rather than it come down to him, but I don't hold back on him because I'm his only advocate nobody has to speak for him. So I have to speak for him. You're absolutely right. I think should be going on, you know, and being like, yo, I need this him. I need some, a them I'm assuming the payer, but you know, I know that the thing is not just going to just fall into place in some things I just have to wait on and just see what's going to happen. So I mean, it all worked out and talking to you does help when you ask me certain questions, then I get to thinking about it, trying to see. Okay. So

Speaker 1 (05:51):

How

Speaker 2 (05:51):

Did they work? Makes me think it makes me think when you ask me certain. Well, I think that was

Speaker 1 (05:59):

The whole, um, uh, point of my, my research was to see if, um, the, the IEP team could use the reflection method and, and questioning like this to help improve the process.

Speaker 2 (06:18):

Yes, I really do, because like I say, a lot of, people's not going to be as vocal as I am and they'll just go by whatever they say, but I don't okay. I'm going to have my own opinion. I'm going to voice it because if they want to hear it a lot. So I kind of, I paid as soon as something.

Speaker 1 (06:39):

Okay. Uh, well I appreciate you, um, letting me, uh, use y'all's experience to do my research and um, when I finished writing, uh, do you want, do you want to be able to see it when I finished? All right. Cause I mean, it's, it's, you know, I have to write a book and um, so if you don't want to read the whole thing, I can send you just the, the, the last two chapters, which is what I'm working on. Now, the data and the, um, the conclusions, uh, the, the first three chapters are, are kind of dry and boring, to be honest.

Speaker 2 (07:22):

So you're still research on the IEP and stuff. Uh it's on

Speaker 1 (07:27):

The, um, how the team works together, the collaboration of the different members of the team and, and how that process is working for the student.

Speaker 2 (07:39):

Gotcha. Gotcha. Okay. Okay. So let's see

Speaker 1 (07:45):

If there's anything about the process that you'd like to address now, now is your platform okay.

Speaker 2 (07:55):

I just, you know, and like, I've always said, a lot of people is not as knowledgeable as I am. I'm not saying I have all the knowledge as school as do go, cause I still need help with some of this stuff, but I think it needs to be like, I don't know if it's really geared to each child need. I think the IEP is just like something they write down as far as whether she does have an a, if they throw it all in there to figure out how to address each child, I guess that's something I just cause some of the stuff they have down on the IEP, I don't mind to do this, so you know how to do this. And I'm, everything is not always addressed on the IEP. It's really not. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (08:45):

Supposed to be, uh, based on the individual.

Speaker 2 (08:50):

Okay. But I think it's more based on some of the stuff is, and, and the progress that they're making, but then a lot of it is more like, you know, where they think they should be And where their lot. So, I mean, I noticed it goes and stuff, but I don't know how they determine how they goes, are sick or what.

Speaker 3 (09:19):

Okay. I mean, I can just tell you from my personal experience as a, as a special ed teacher, I, um, and I teach elementary, so it's not the same. I just have a passion for, um, vocational training and stuff. And so that's what I'm, uh, my research is focused on high school, but as, as far as what I do with my students, our curriculum has some, uh, testing in it. And I think it's the same, um, curriculum they use in high school. It's just at a different level. And so you, you test them at the beginning of the school and then you monitor monthly and, and throughout the year to see if they improve and then you base goals on what they can and can't do in that curriculum. Does that make sense? Okay. So like for instance, my, my students, I have, I have a second grader that, um, doesn't know the ABCs.

Speaker 3 (10:29):

And so one, it hit, one of the goals for that student would be to not learn the whole alphabet in one year, but maybe, you know, like a fourth of the alphabet, um, to be able to recognize the letter, know the name of the letter and the sound it makes just based on what I know that child can do, you know? And so somebody else, it might be recognizing 10 sight words, um, just because we're in elementary school and our ability level for

different, you know, so, okay. So it really is supposed to be based on what the child, you, you right at the eye, the IEP based on what they can do, and then you set their goals for what you hope to be able to get them to in that year.

Speaker 2 ([11:25](#)):

Okay. Does that, does that make any sense or does that clarify?

Speaker 3 ([11:33](#)):

So, um, and I would think from a high school point of view. Yeah. I mean, okay, so this is, this is the reason behind this as a special ed, I've always taught elementary level, but I've also always believed that if we teach those kids a skill, they'll always do it the way we teach them to, and they'll be loyal lifelong employees, whether they're, whether they can read or not, because they, I mean, they're just like anybody else, they want to be productive. Right. You know, um, and they want to feel needed and like they have something to offer. And so that's kinda how I, um, ended up working towards vocational training and what that means for high school students. And so, um, I'm hoping my research will make a difference in helping them get that vocational training that they need.

Speaker 2 ([12:42](#)):

Okay. Okay. Got it. And so, yeah.

Speaker 3 ([12:46](#)):

Yeah. I've been, um, I've been a big help in allowing me to do this and I appreciate it so much.

Speaker 2 ([12:53](#)):

Oh, no problem. No problem. I'm scared that we can hit. Okay. Well, um,

Speaker 3 ([13:00](#)):

I'm going to talk to SPED1 again, and then, um, when I get finished writing, uh, it'll be the spring before I everything's finalized, but I'll make sure that both of you, um, are able to, to get a copy.

Speaker 2 ([13:19](#)):

Okay. Okay. Alrighty. All right. Thank you so much. Thank you. All right. All right. Bye-bye.

P1.2 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	I	Future Programs for after high school presented by teacher
Green	I	Future programs for after high school presented by parent
Blue	I	Does parent feel supported
Pink	I	Did research provide any help in the collaboration process

APPENDIX T

SPED 1 INTERVIEW 2 AND IOTAS

SPED 1 Interview 2 and IOTAs

Teacher Interview 2 11/19/20

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

I'm good. How are you? Good. All right, so this, this should be quick since the meeting really was quick. Um, yeah. Um, okay. About nobody being there. Um, is that typical? Um, did the time on it change? Cause I mean,

Speaker 2 ([00:28](#)):

Yes, yes. Mom request is the time change because I guess she had a conflict with the other time and I don't know why, I don't know that made a difference because she really didn't have time to really talk much, but maybe that was like an unsupervised time for her. He's like, she's a nursing student in clinicals. And so she was, she couldn't miss, they can't miss a day clinical. Like they have to, I mean, it's really bad for them, so, um, she couldn't take off. So she asked to move it, I guess, to nine 30 and I guess I was just a better time for her. So, um, we moved the time and I'm sorry. I forgot. So you okay?

Speaker 1 ([01:20](#)):

Yeah. Cause yeah, she kept, I was just curious because I mean, not that it has anything to do with it. She kept telling me she's a pediatric nurse.

Speaker 2 ([01:29](#)):

Well, she might've been supervised in clinicals then she just said she was in clinicals. So she might've been supervising nurses in clinicals.

Speaker 1 ([01:43](#)):

Okay. I was just curious. Um, and so when she requested the time change, was everybody me excluded and notified of the time change?

Speaker 2 ([01:56](#)):

Uh huh. Cause we do it all through, um, the outlook calendar. And so whenever she requested it and I said, yes, we changed the time. Cause it was after I sent the first notice. Like she, she requested it early. So, um, I just went back into the calendar and change the time. And so everybody gets an email notice that says the time has changed. Now I should also be noted though that, um, during the month of October we were doing all those compensatory services, Vinod things. And at Southwood we have 181 cases. And so we had to hold 181 IEP meetings in the month of October. So it was kind of, it was a crazy time and the administrators were, they were trying to send an administrator to every meeting. So they were probably pretty overwhelmed, but it's not unusual for usually usually, um, the administrators there [inaudible] usually is there as our instructional specialist, but with mine, he doesn't worry so much because he knows I know what I'm doing, but like, uh, the agency, like if those hack, they never call, unless it's somebody like they'll, I don't know. Sometimes they will, but they really don't come as often as they should.

Speaker 1 (03:38):

Okay.

Speaker 2 (03:40):

Oh, and I'm sorry, we will meet again before the year's over. Right.

Speaker 1 (03:44):

For, uh, transitions is what mom told me. Um, all right. So let me ask this. This is, I had asked mom, she says, she thinks she's always prepared for these meetings and she has an idea of what she should ask and what should be going on.

Speaker 2 (04:09):

Well, I think, I think at this point she probably pretty well does because he's a senior. I mean, she's been doing this for so long. Um, and, and not a whole lot changes with him year to year. Um, he's pretty, his, his, um, disability is stable. Um, you know, and he's kinda leveled off as far as academics go and everything. Um, he's, he's made some gains, but it's like, um, I think she kinda knows where he is and she knows what supports she wants for him. And she's pretty satisfied with what we're doing. So I think for the past, you know, last year and this year, and probably for all the festival, because like I said, at this point, she's done it so much that, you know, now as far as, um, does she know what her rights are? She has a disagreement or whatever.

Speaker 2 (05:11):

I tell her, you know, that she can call an IEP meeting any time, you know, and all that. I think she knows that, but as far as, um, I mean, in her case, she probably is pretty comfortable because she, she is, he is, she attended last year's meeting. Um, as far as I know, she's attended all of his high school meetings. I didn't have him, I didn't hold his IEP ninth and his grade year, but I think she, you know, she has attended all of his meeting. So she's a plugged in parent when it comes to like school stuff, you know, she comes and she shows up, she comes to back to school nights. She does all those things, you know?

Speaker 1 (05:50):

All right. Um, as far as, I mean, it's hard to say because you with COVID-19, everything has been so weird. Um, and, and needless to say, my, my research hasn't gone the way I expected it to. Um, so one of the questions I asked her was that had being a part of my research and, you know, doing these, uh, summaries of how you think the meetings go and then talking about them had that helped any with the process. Did she, if she thought it had helped her in with the process and she thought it had, and I was just wondering, um, since really the two of you are the only common participants, because you're the only two from the first meeting that were at the second meeting. Yeah. Um, do, do you think that helps you any in the process,

Speaker 2 (07:01):

But being a part of the research? Um, I don't think it really made a difference as far as that goes. I mean, what kind of, we just did what we do, you know? So, um, I don't think for me it really changed anything mean I don't, yeah. I don't think it really changed much.

Speaker 1 (07:21):

Okay. It doesn't affect does it affecting the way you think about it at all or that the way you deal with parents or? Um,

Speaker 2 (07:33):

Well, I mean, I definitely, um, and thinking about you mean like, as far as how I think about transitioning, um, not, not being a part of the research itself, but I'm not always think about transition because that's something I worry about. You know, I always worry that our, and we, are we doing enough or what else can we do? You know? Um, so I don't think being a part of the research has made me any more or less aware of it or concerned about it because, because I've always been very concerned about it. You know, this is something that I do worry about. I'm glad, I'm glad that you're doing the research, but, um, as far as things that I've done, I would have done all those things. Anyway.

Speaker 1 (08:41):

What, what do you think should come out of this research?

Speaker 2 (08:46):

Well, um, I would really like to see us have a better plan. Um, I would like to see participation across the, whenever the thing is, we say a lot on paper and then we don't follow through. And I would really like to see some solid follow through friends, the districts on, on our end, you know, and I, I think I told you before, I'd really like to see more knowledge for parents, but I wanted, I needed it to be accessible to them. I mean, we say this, they know their rights, or we give them that little booklet. Well, you know, we have parents who can't read, how does given in that booklet, help them understand like, like I wish we had classes, you know, that they could, you know, in this world of, of zoom and all that, we have opportunities there that we could reach out to parents who can't physically come, because some of them don't have vehicles or whatever, you know, we can, we have more opportunities now than ever to reach out to those parents and say, Hey, let me, let me talk to you about what should happen at an IEP meeting me, tell you what, what your rights are and what you can do if you disagree.

Speaker 2 (10:01):

And these are the people you can call, if you have an issue, you know, I mean, they need all that information because they don't know. And if you don't know, and I'm sorry, I'm getting on my soap box,

Speaker 1 (10:15):

This is your opportunity. This is the perfect opportunity. So

Speaker 2 (10:19):

Yeah, the thing is, um, nobody and I, I probably shouldn't say this, but nobody in the district is going to go out of their way for those kids. If the parents don't speak up, right. You know, if the parents don't know and don't say anything, then it's very easy to sweep stuff under the rug or just, you know, look the other way or whatever. And we need parents who are aware and also they need to know what their, um, what's available. **You know, what, what is available after graduation?** What, you know, for our kids that are in high school, what's next and, and parents are afraid and they don't know. And we need some to be able to tell them, this is what's next.

Speaker 1 (11:07):

I really agree with you. It does seem like it gets to the point where they're, you know, at that final transition meeting and there's really not much to do or say, right. You know, and then the parents are left with an adult child that mentally is never going to grow and they don't know what to do.

Speaker 2 (11:33):

Yeah. Well, I know I'll tell you even more than that. Um, **for inclusion students, we don't do a good job.** Um, because I am a parent of an inclusion student that just graduated. And I know about Louisiana rehabilitation services because I work with them through, you know, our little program that we have started, but I didn't know, half the things that they did did you know, that they provide tutoring for students with disabilities. If a child can use to college, they, um, will help them with gas, money and all that kind of stuff. They do that for people with disabilities and our inclusion kids can take advantage of that, but they don't know. And so after my son graduated, um, I went to sign him up and they were like, well, you missed the first round. And I had no clue when you were supposed to sign up for things or anything. And I'm, uh, I'm in the system. So I know our parents don't know. And our, our, even our inclusion parents need that information right now. They don't know what's out there

Speaker 1 (12:38):

Is, let me ask this because I'm not, I'm not sure that's why I'm asking. Is there supposed to be kind of a liaison between LRS and in the special ed classroom or whatever? I mean, isn't that low taxes.

Speaker 2 (13:01):

Yeah, it is.

Speaker 1 (13:05):

They're the ones that technically should be putting that information out there.

Speaker 2 ([13:10](#)):

Huh? Yeah. Um, and honestly what they typically do, um, they make sure that classrooms, vocational classrooms are stopped. So like, uh, we had a culinary arts class at Southwood for students with disabilities. So they were supposed to outfit that classroom to be functional, like with a stove and all that and sink and all that kind of stuff. Yeah. That never happened. Um, but that's what they're supposed to do. They, they do curriculum stuff with us. Um, but very little like, like even with this cattle works program, they told me that I probably should start looking for businesses. And I'm like, isn't that what you're supposed to be doing? You know? But it's still gonna come down to me trying to find businesses to participate in their program.

Speaker 1 ([14:04](#)):

I think I asked that question when I interviewed the vo-tech person. And I mean, this is, this is just between you and me, but yes, because my, do you teach the unique curriculum also, right? Yes. Okay. So, you know, they're, they're in charge of, of making sure we have access to that curriculum. Um, and, and what I've noticed is from the department, they're really good at talking about stuff. Um, and, um, and telling you what other people have done. Yeah. But I haven't really seen a lot of action and the things, even, even above my vo-tech person, like at the beginning of the year, I emailed someone at special program center and I said like, Hey, how are we going to integrate unique with canvas for virtual kids? And this is no lie. The email I got, ms. Henderson. We're all learning when we learn how we'll let you know.

Speaker 2 ([15:21](#)):

Yeah. And they've never told us, have they started making, you know, did you get the email? Like I finally went to him and was like, okay. The only thing I can think of is if we make something, can we share it in commons or whatever? Well, nobody else was sharing anything. So I just quit. Cause I was like, I'm sharing all my stuff and nobody's sharing anything with me.

Speaker 1 ([15:41](#)):

Well, I, um, I signed up, they had one of the classes they said they were going to do was incorporating unique into canvas and it was supposed to be in September and I signed up for it. And then the day of I go to, to sign into the, the meeting, the zoom meeting for it. And it's been changed to November 10th. Yeah. From September, November 10th. So I go to the one on November 10th

Speaker 2 ([16:14](#)):

And no one ever show up. Cause I went to that one too. And it was like, I was never let in

Speaker 1 ([16:18](#)):

Really? No, I got into that one on November 10th, but here's what it was. Each person took an aspect of all the things we had to learn this year before school started and talk to us about it. Like, this is what you do to start your, um, your home page for canvas. This

is what other people have done. We had to do all that stuff back in August. And then this is what other people have done. Uh, you know, you have to have a unique login. All your kids have to have a unique log in. This is what other people know. So they, they talked about all the stuff we had to know before school started, but they never talked about how to put it all together. And that's all, that's been the question. Yeah. And, um, you know, I do all, cause I was told at my campus, I have to be paperless. So I've done all my testing individually on zoom, um, with each child. And I mean, granted, thankfully I only have seven kids and two of them aren't there most of the time. So it's not a big deal.

Speaker 2 ([17:34](#)):

Yeah. So I have, I have 18 children. And so what I'm doing is putting things in Cammie or making a quiz in canvas. And that's what I've been doing because, um, I tried to use the assignments in unique. But my issue with that is if you put in an assignment or assign a lesson for a certain day, it's only there for so long. And then it disappears. Well, our day can change at the drop of a hat. Like today, we, as I might've planned to do something today, we have seen your pictures. And so that took an hour and I wasn't expecting that. So that threw off our schedule will, if I had put in a unique lesson for that time, at the end of the day, it goes away. I don't know how to get it back. And it's a pain to try to move it around and all that. So I'm like the heck with that. They log in and they do stuff on uni. But if I want a grade on it, I'll put it in canvas, make a quiz or a do candy or something like that.

Speaker 1 ([18:38](#)):

My problem with, with it is, and the reason I've just, it's just become easier to do it individually and have them tell me the answers. Right. My kids, I mean, granted they're fifth graders mostly. Um, yeah, they, the virtual ones are only doing canvas when we're on zoom. Yeah. They don't, they don't do anything independently at home and nobody's making them yeah.

Speaker 2 ([19:11](#)):

Well I test my virtuals that way too. I test my virtual

Speaker 1 ([19:16](#)):

One-on-one if, uh, if I put something in canvas, it's going to be just like, it was in Google classroom. They can't read it. Yeah. They can't. So therefore they're not going to answer the way they would and unique. And most of the time in unique, it's not that they really know the answer is they memorize the pattern. Right. So it's, I don't know how much they're really learning. And I feel like most of the time, this year, I feel like I'm wasting my time.

Speaker 2 ([19:49](#)):

Me too. I, I feel like I spend more time on tech support than I do actually teaching. I don't think I've ever felt this ineffective in, I don't know if I've ever felt this ineffective, you know, even my first year I was going there this year. I'm not enjoying this year.

Speaker 1 (20:06):

I am not, I didn't know. Well, and then I was supposed to have my observation tomorrow and I go, I go for my pre-conference interview this morning. And my principal is out because one of her kids was exposed to COVID and nobody called me. And so, so I'm not having my observation, even after I've done all of the plans and all the paperwork and, and nobody ever said a word to me.

Speaker 2 (20:45):

It sounds like about that sounds about right. We're dealing with that too. Um,

Speaker 1 (20:50):

Um, I think it's a shame though, that more people don't show up and don't take, uh, take the IEP meeting seriously as you know, being a member of the team.

Speaker 2 (21:04):

Yeah. Well, and part of that though is kind of our fault because I don't ask a lot of people for input either. You know? I mean, I write the IEP, I know the kid, I know what they need. And so I sit down and write the IEP. The AP person does his part, speech does theirs. There's not a lot of collaboration. I don't need anything from administrators. I don't need anything from the regular ed teacher for my kids. Cause they're, self-contained um, you know, and when they are in a regular class, like for their electives and stuff, uh, Perez with them and the parent can tell me if they need something. You know? So honestly part of that is our fault because it's, it probably feels like a time waste for them. Not, I don't want to say a time-waster, but like there's not really anything for them to contribute beyond, you know, is there anything else we can do for you?

Speaker 2 (21:57):

You know what I'm saying? Unless there's a major problem. Now, if there's a problem, they show up in force, you know? Um, but as far as like, you know, an average run of the meal, we're not going to have any issues. This is an easy IEP. There's not a whole lot that I ever ask of them. So, and I've never thought about that before. And so we've had this conversation, but it's true. It probably, they have other things to do. And I would imagine it probably feels to them like it's a waste of their time because you know, they're just sitting in a meeting and they don't have anything to contribute.

Speaker 1 (22:33):

Well, I mean,

Speaker 2 (22:36):

I would say that's probably what it feels like to them.

Speaker 1 (22:39):

Well, they should have something to contribute. Yeah. And that's why, yeah. That's why I think it's a shame that they don't, they don't take it seriously. I mean, cause it's these kids' future.

Speaker 2 (22:53):

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (22:56):

Well, I appreciate it.

SPED1.2 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	I	Future Programs for after high school presented by teacher
Green		Future programs for after high school presented by parent
Blue	II	Does parent feel supported
Pink	I	Did research provide any help in the collaboration process

APPENDIX U

IS 1 INTERVIEW 2 AND IOTAS

IS 1 Interview 2 and IOTAs

IS1 Interview 2 12.18.20

Speaker 1 (00:53):

I I've interviewed a couple of people who weren't at the meeting that were at the initial meeting just to kind of, and you're one of them, um, just to kind of get some, I don't know, feedback or validation or whatever. Um, when I talked to the parent and asked her, is she thought the research had been of any help to her? She said, yes. Um, she said it really especially doing like the summary and then talking to me had, made her think more about the things she needs to ask in a meeting. Um, SPED1 didn't think it had helped at all from her point of view, because, you know, as, as an IEP holder myself, you do what you have to do no matter what you know. And, um, I was just wondering, um, from your point of view, uh, do you think this research is viable for parents? Is this something that more parents should be introduced to? Um, do you think it would help in the process at all? If parents had someone sitting there saying, you know, beforehand, you should think about this?

Speaker 2 (02:16):

I think so. Because most of our, most of our parents, especially parents of students with the disability, similar to the student that you are, um, uh, following, um, most of them graduating high school is the end of the road for them. And they don't think of, will they be able to live independently? Will they be able to hold a job with less prompting from a job coach? Will they be able to manage the minimum of what they need to do in order for them to have a, not just an independent life, but also a quality life? Most of our parents don't think that way it's because they don't have probably, they don't have the tools or the, of what to ask and when to ask those types of questions, because from experience also of our students on that side of, um, like in the moderate, um, sometimes autism sometimes, always like in the, in the leap, when the classrooms, parents, parents have the mentality of, I just want my child to get a high school diploma and then we'll figure something, something after. And I've had parents that two years later, they will come and enjoy them. It's just something for my child, like the years.

Speaker 1 (03:35):

Well, let me ask you, has, has Caddo work's been introduced in a way that people are aware of what it's doing for their kids in high school?

Speaker 2 (03:51):

I think it was, but it was a quick presentation and how I wish it was more on like how I wish it was more on, like when we do annual meetings, they come and not just make a big presentation because it can be too much for a lot of parents. Like, I know that for some parents that were there, they were just there because they want their child in the program, regardless of what this program is. They just want something else too for their child.

Speaker 1 (04:18):

You know, it, uh, it's interesting you say that because, um, I can't remember who, I think more than one person has said that they felt like once a year wasn't enough. I think I know the parents said that that one, especially when you get into the brass tacks of, um, job training and what's next for them after high school, like, um, he's a senior. Um, so that's her primary concern right now. What happens after may? And she, she feels like she hasn't been given enough information yet to be comfortable with what happens after he finishes high school. And, uh, and she says a lot of the parents feel that way because they talked to her because she, she does have a college education. So a lot of them think she knows more than they do. And, and she said she would like to see something like the meeting we had back in, uh, February and March, um, to happen as early as ninth grade.

Speaker 2 (05:27):

Yes. And, um, I think with, um, the principal's permission, we've got to move it to 10 11th, 11, 12, because I think it's kind of late when you to do it that way, because we do have a lot of parents that really want to know, but at the same time they don't know who to ask.

Speaker 1 (05:50):

Right. And another, um, participant mentioned not just limiting it to, um, just moderate students. Is this something that's going to be offered also to inclusion students?

Speaker 2 (06:07):

Um, because I already taught, um, spelled to Ms. M it's about it. I have one good candidate and the inclusion side, she's a junior and have already opened up the idea, um, when we did the annual, this year, that may benefit from kind of works program. So, but with the pandemic and everything, and her making sure that she has all the credits that she needs in order for her to graduate, I don't know yet where to like insert all those things, but she needs to do, she does need to attend classes.

Speaker 1 (06:36):

Right. Right. All right. So I mean, my research isn't really about the vocational stuff, but it is an interest to me. That's why I ask questions about, um, my original topic did, um, start out with vocational services was my primary focus. And, um, in the dissertation process, things change a lot, you know? So over the years that I've been working on this, this is where I've gotten to, this is the topic, um, that I've gotten approved. And so as far as the team goes, because when I talked to vo-tech, they said that, you know, they're not always there at an annual meeting because annual meetings are just another meeting. And, um, but that, they're definitely there for the transition meeting in may, because that's a big meeting. That's a big, um, event, I guess. And so would there be because his annual, there were only three people at his annual, um, is that, is that typical?

Speaker 2 (08:00):

It's not typical, but it would be if, um, um, there was, there was a change in a very short, um, change was made in a very short, um, that with a very short note is yeah, but it's not. Hmm.

Speaker 1 (08:18):

Okay. So she's told me that, uh, she put it in Google calendar and Google calendar notifies everybody of the change. All right. We don't at the elementary level, we don't use Google calendar, so, um,

Speaker 2 (08:33):

Oh, okay. Yes. Um, starting last year I implemented that kind of invite because the, um, related services are just everywhere to keep up with the schedule, because if you use Google calendar, when you check, when you click on the calendar and your email, you'll see your schedule. And that helps me a lot. If there will be a conflict, this icing on the cake, I have a meeting on half the time already student in a different school. Yeah. So starting with the pandemic and we don't know if we're going to be in the building or not. So yeah. We started doing calendar Google invites. Okay. Right. So

Speaker 1 (09:16):

How, how is his annual going to be different from his transition meeting in may?

Speaker 2 (09:25):

The only thing that you will be different though, because okay. When we come back, we have to start determining students who will be good candidates for CELDT. And, um, I don't know. LSUS right. It depends on their address. Two locations in Caddo. One is an LSUS and another one is on salvage university. Yes. It depends on their address where, which side of town they live in. It's it's the bus route actually

Speaker 1 (09:59):

Half go here and half go here.

Speaker 2 (10:01):

Yes. And, um, there will be, um, we will send, um, a questionnaire to parents and SPED1 will also fill out one, VOTAC will actually serve as student and they will come together first. If the student is a good candidate or not. And then if the team designs, usually I am only the receiving hand patient. So if the two eyes, Hey, let's move forward and recommend the student yourself program. Then we contact, um, the cell program at LTU. So if she, if he goes to LSU, is he will be a captain Shreve students because they have to remain Caddo students. Yeah. So then we do a meeting and then Ms. Can't remember her name's DM. I think, I think that's her name. She, um, do a presentation and it's a thorough presentation. Only thing though, because this year we just did a zoom meeting. So I didn't even know if the parents really thought that point or not. Could only one student we recommended for only one student went to the arm, went to the house.

Speaker 1 (11:11):

Wow. Okay. So let me ask to see if I'm thinking. Right. I know in the past, um, especially moderate and severe students could stay in high school until they're 22. So

now this program, the CELDT program picks them up at 18 and continues their education at a college at a local college until the

Speaker 2 ([11:37](#)):

Today's 22. And they don't have to be 18. They just have to finish a four year, um, in, in a high school setting.

Speaker 1 ([11:44](#)):

So if they don't do this, they're done at the regular four year interval.

Speaker 2 ([11:51](#)):

Yes. If they don't move forward with yes. Even if they go to the cell program, they still receive their diploma after four years of high school.

Speaker 1 ([12:00](#)):

Okay. Is it a diploma or a certificate of company?

Speaker 2 ([12:05](#)):

It's a diploma. Yeah. Louisiana is no longer giving certificates for students. That's why we have pretty three or not. It's called April down.

Speaker 1 ([12:13](#)):

Okay. I wasn't there,

Speaker 2 ([12:14](#)):

Nicole is different than any their transcript. They will look different. There's worth of their college will take their transcript. That's the sad part of it.

Speaker 1 ([12:23](#)):

Okay. So, okay. I, I can see where that would be beneficial actually, because, um, in my research, I had seen an article about a young girl that had finished his finished high school and had gotten that certificate of completion. And she applied to vocational school to be a nurses aid, I think, and got accepted into the program, completed her first semester. And then it's like all of a sudden they looked at her high school transcript and said, Hey, you didn't get a diploma. You can't go to school here. And she had passed her first semester in their program. So she was kind of stuck. And, uh, so, um, this is a much better alternative for them.

Speaker 2 ([13:11](#)):

Yes. And also, I know for a fact that they can take some vocational courses. I know bitsy has one program for them. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([13:22](#)):

Is the Caddo, uh, program as involved with Bipsy as Bosure schools? Are

Speaker 2 (13:29):

I have no idea if yeah.

Speaker 1 (13:32):

Okay. Because, you know, I know they offer a lot of vocational training and what they call soft skills training at Bipsy. And I think Bowser has been doing it much longer than we have. Um, so I was just curious if, if we were using the resources in our, in our backyard, like

Speaker 2 (13:58):

Yes. And, um, I also think that keto has failed on promoting the cell program. Oh, really? Yes. Because I've been, I've been in the high school setting since 2014 and I feel like I'm the only one promoting it.

Speaker 1 (14:12):

What the caddo works are, are still,

Speaker 2 (14:16):

Should be the school system in general. Yeah. Yeah. I, I, that's just how I feel like if I, if I, if I have to be brutally honest, I feel like when they entered high school, that should be presented at a parent, you know, what to expect after.

Speaker 1 (14:34):

Right. Well, and that's what the parent told me. And I think SPED1 said the same thing. They would like to see this information presented their first year of high school, not wait until you're almost finished. Um, my one

Speaker 2 (14:52):

That I don't want the parents to think is, uh, is, um, that the moderate classroom or the severe classroom is a babysitting classroom. No, they are working on some skills. They are work working on certain skills and there is a plan for them after the four years here. That's what most families,

Speaker 1 (15:12):

I think from, from the parent I spoke to, I think what she explained to me is a lot of parents feel like once their kid graduates the four year program, that the school kind of washes the school district kind of washes their hands and, and they're just left to fend for themselves. And they don't feel like they have enough information to find the services that are in place already

Speaker 2 (15:44):

Because, um, some times, because we do send our, we know we do send our notices to the agencies. They never, some, some may even tell us, are they seniors? Cause we don't come out. If they're not in yours, I'll even ask those questions. And I was like, you know what, because it's, it's the law sin. If they, they don't, they don't steal

Speaker 1 (16:08):

Well. And vo-tech told me that when they attend the transition meeting, they hand out pamphlets and that's not always going to be the best presentation of information for some people

Speaker 2 (16:23):

It's easy for us teachers because we're very familiar with it. But parents that it may be their first time. A lot of our parents don't even know what art is, is that should be your best friend. That's your next go-to

Speaker 1 (16:37):

Right. And, and I don't think a lot of people, like I had heard of it before, but it's because a family member was, um, legally blind. I mean, she could see, but she was legally blind. And, um, they were able to get her college tuition paid through LRS. And a lot of people don't know this.

Speaker 2 (17:01):

Yeah. They'll always, it does a lot of things for our students on apartment, getting your drivers first driver's license, all those type of things, job coaching. And they're not exclusive for students with IEP. They also take students with IAP. Right,

Speaker 1 (17:20):

Right. That, yeah. And that's, um, that's why I think somebody mentioned, um, including inclusion students in this process

Speaker 2 (17:31):

Cybil for any students with disabilities, they take,

Speaker 1 (17:35):

But they weren't, the meeting was just for moderate students.

Speaker 2 (17:40):

Yes. I um, because no one was the first, when vo-tech and a principal had their agreement that we will start from there. You will eventually go to involve the entire school. But I don't think that will happen soon because the students are already like asking me like Mr. Wanted or whatever you're going to go to this job. I know

Speaker 1 (18:04):

That's what, uh, the parent told me she was frustrated about in March. This is because of the kid, her kid, uh, was immediate. Like, so when can I start working? As soon as the information is presented to, to these students, with this mindset, they're like, I can get a job. When do I start? Why can't I start right now

Speaker 2 (18:26):

Is how we sell the program to them. At some point we have this other program and so that they will be excited by this pandemic. I don't think they will ever go to the work. Right.

Speaker 1 (18:39):

Yeah. It's that part really sucks. Um, I don't think I have any other questions for, is there anything you'd like to add that you think would be relevant? There are no names used in my research.

Speaker 2 (19:02):

Yeah. I'm just like, I wish that we have a, I know both guys doing their best or they keep to provide post-secondary services to these students are open books, then post-secondary, but I just wish that we compete for more options. Right. Like I know this, um, parishes is I've been to, um, work with trainees outside of Caddo parish schools. Like even if I link with Domino's or pizza, or like the school itself has a petition with those businesses around the area for, for our students. Like, I didn't think we have that kind of relationship here yet with local businesses.

Speaker 1 (19:47):

Well, and that's something I've discussed with SPED1 that, um, she is under the impression that for that to happen, she has to go out and beat the bushes and find those businesses that are willing to participate. And she has, she has to do that on her own time outside of her job. And that can, that's a lot of responsibility and time-consuming

Speaker 2 (20:16):

Yes, and insurance-wise and all these things. And because they also have to make sure that they are also covered.

Speaker 1 (20:21):

Right. And see that's what, um, the lady from Bipsy and she, and I talked about that at length, that once you agree to be a vendor, um, like Bosure Bipsy, she finds someone who's willing to do the job. She's a vendor for LRS. And so once she finds a, um, business, that's willing to be, to train she's responsible for the insurance, for that student to be on site. And she's responsible for paying that business to train that student. And there's a lot of, you know, checking up on them, you know, and stuff. And she says, so she get, she gets paid, um, through the state and federal government to follow this process. She goes, but after all the legwork and stuff, you really don't make any money doing it. It's, it's kind of a wash. And, um, a lot of PE a lot of businesses want to participate, but don't realize what the guidelines for doing it are. Um, so there's what

I've, what I've learned is there's a lot of information. That's just not being shared between the different groups that want to be a part of this, including the parents, the vendors, you know, everyone. And, um, hopefully, hopefully my research will improve this.

Speaker 2 ([22:03](#)):

Yes, they did will open doors of discussion. We need to have these things in place.

Speaker 1 ([22:09](#)):

Right. The principal, I mean, she is so eager, um, to, to do anything, to improve the school and, um, and work with people to make sure that happens. And, and that's a blessing. Um, and that's why my research is at her school. Um, but yeah, the pandemic has really put a damper on it. And so I'm hoping they don't reject my, my data because of the pandemic.

Speaker 2 ([22:50](#)):

Yeah. I think we just needed some push and really work on to put, put, to put something in place for our students.

Speaker 1 ([23:03](#)):

Well, if, if my university accepts my data, um, I'm hoping I can come back and give another presentation to the principal and then maybe she can push that information up higher. Um, because like I said, I started out thinking about vocational training for kids in special ed. And it's always been my thought because I've been teaching special ed at the elementary level for like 11 years now. Um, it's always been my thought though, if we give them a job skill, they will be lifelong loyal employees, um, and dependable, you know, um, because they want a purpose. They want even, I've noticed, you know, my lowest functioning students at the elementary level want to have something they're good at that people will tell them they did a good job. And I think a lot of kids in the same situation who are even older filled the same way.

Speaker 1 ([24:13](#)):

And I had a parent get mad at me one time, because as a fifth grader, I said, you know, he hasn't learned to read yet. We need to start working on life skills. And she says, Oh, we're just going to give up. I said, no, we're not giving up. We're taking a different approach. And, you know, thinking about, you know, can he navigate the bus system? Can he, you know, function in a job situation, as long as I'm alive, he'll never have to do those things. I said, it's not about you. It's about what he's going to be content with as an adult. Is he going to be content to stay at home the rest of his life?

Speaker 2 ([24:53](#)):

And that's the mentality that is really so hard to change. It's like, sorry, like when we do IEP for seniors, I always ask at the meeting, I always ask the parent what's your high school. And it will take them a while. And I like, okay, we are only few months away from graduation.

Speaker 1 (25:13):

I think we've got to start asking that question sooner than senior year, you know, because, um, another thing I talked to vo-tech about was that parents are so dependent on that S that monthly check they're already getting that. Sometimes they're afraid if their student gets a job, they're going to lose that income. And, um, and so we've got to, we've got to combine information, I think, and provide it to them at an earlier time to get that student better prepared.

Speaker 2 (25:52):

Yes. And also kids are actually given the opportunity to learn a lot during like, especially in the, um, before the school year, it starts starts. It's just that I think a lot of information is given to them at the same time, too much at once. Yes. I was like, well, let's just enroll today. My article is just doing enrollment. They actually, because I attended the son of his zoom meetings at the school, um, arrange for our knife for our incoming freshmen. And there were a lot of information there and the counselors provided a lot of information, administration, administrators provide, but I'm like, okay, this is too many information in pot. One time, it could have been better. Okay. First time peaks will give this the second nine weeks. We will tell you this. Yeah,

Speaker 1 (26:44):

Yeah. Don't overwhelm them.

Speaker 2 (26:47):

Yes. Because sometimes we think that parents can understand us the way we understand things.

Speaker 1 (26:56):

It's kinda like, you know, when we do our observations, they're always like you, you got 15 minutes to do a lesson and then you've got to have some other activities go on and, and they tell you, you know, when you do, there's a reason Ted talks are only like 15, 20 minutes. Because after that amount of time, you've lost the human brain. They can't focus on one thing longer than that. So if you've got an hour long meeting and you've got five or six people feeding information, um, you've, you're right. You've lost the majority of your crowd.

Speaker 2 (27:35):

Yes. Because like I have one parent and it's already almost the end of first semester, and I'm still interested in German club that hasn't been discussed before this time of the school year. It's too late. Now. She said she didn't, she never received information. It's like, you did receive the information. You probably show the, um, flyer somewhere.

Speaker 1 (27:59):

Yeah, yeah. And too much paper ends up in a stack somewhere and forgotten about I, I think, yeah, that's, that's probably going to be one of the suggestions I make for in my

conclusion is that, uh, instead of bombarding people all at once to have meetings more frequently, but shorter in length, um, and, and maybe even start with what information do you think you need, um, because what, what they think they need and what we think they need may not be the same thing. So I really appreciate your time. You're always interesting to me on how can I ask you a question? How long have you been teaching in America since 2008, 2009. How long were you a teacher in the Philippines?

Speaker 2 ([29:02](#)):

Um, I've been teaching in the Philippines since 2008.

Speaker 1 ([29:05](#)):

Okay. Wow. You've been at it

Speaker 2 ([29:08](#)):

And all three and then I got a fan graduated may and then I got my job the month after.

Speaker 1 ([29:13](#)):

Wow. Okay. Well, I just wanted a little background information. Do you, do you really like it here?

Speaker 2 ([29:20](#)):

Yes. When I was in the Philippines, I was graduated with a degree in philosophy and, um, I actually started teaching English first, and then I got interested with special ed because I had an, a, I have a nephew with autism and I wanted to help my sister. So I went back to school and she had, um, um, special education classes. And that's how I, yes,

Speaker 1 ([29:53](#)):

That's cool. Okay. So is like one of those, um, liberal arts degrees that a lot of people think should be done away with?

Speaker 2 ([30:04](#)):

People are surprised when I tell them that, Hey, I majored in philosophy when I was in college.

Speaker 1 ([30:09](#)):

Well, I, um, my I'm far removed from education myself, my bachelor's degrees in architecture. And, um, I had, um, a life changing moment and decided to become a teacher. And, uh, I, I picked special ed because my middle son is autistic. Um, and so I've, I've had to deal with a lot of special ed teachers and a lot of IEP meetings. And so I kind of had an idea of what to expect. So, um, that's why I took that direction, but

Speaker 2 ([30:46](#)):

Yeah, I never thought I'll become a teacher cause I was actually, um, it was my nephew, um, Oh, wow. Once you become a lawyer at some point in my life, but I'm like, I'm good.

Speaker 1 (31:02):

Always fun talking to you. I really appreciate your time and happy holidays.

Speaker 2 (31:07):

You too. Bye.

IS1.2 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	III	Future Programs for after high school presented by teacher
Green	I	Future programs for after high school presented by parent
Blue	III	Does parent feel supported
Pink	II	Did research provide any help in the collaboration process

APPENDIX V

VOTAC1 INTERVIEW 2

VOTAC1 Interview 2

VOTAC1 Interview 2 12.13.20

Speaker 2 ([02:50](#)):

Okay. So she told me the meeting only lasted 15 minutes. The only people in the meeting were the parent, her and the ape teacher. Okay. Is that typical?

Speaker 1 ([03:07](#)):

That's not typical. Like I stated before, some now are doing well, not to you and let me get out of my, my political mode. No. Well, I mean, okay. So w

Speaker 2 ([03:21](#)):

Let me just say w exactly what I mean, you can answer it. I mean, technically shouldn't the IS be there.

Speaker 1 ([03:31](#)):

Should I read the, IS should be there, but if you have an East essential teacher, when you already know have, well, yeah. Well, let me go back. Let me do, let me be politically correct. Yeah. I should be there. PCA

Speaker 2 ([03:48](#)):

Are an admits person on the administrative team, right? Exactly. Okay. So nobody was from the administrative team. Was there should, uh, shouldn't somebody from vo-tech either

Speaker 1 ([04:03](#)):

Vo tech is we should be there, but it ha it depends on the student. Meaning what do you mean? If it's a senior, we would like to, okay. If he was a senior, we would like to be there. So that's why these excusal is so important. And I believe the majority of her students have already been linked up to vo-tech and all, I mean, to some type of transitional plan, and they're already linked up to LRS and they're doing stuff, uh, transitional, um, uh, activities or programs. I believe most of her kids are in cattle work. Sorry.

Speaker 2 ([04:47](#)):

They should be. Cause I mean, you know, back in February, his mother signed him up for LRS at that meeting. So shouldn't a representative from LRS had been there too.

Speaker 1 (05:02):

No, he already have a case. Uh, no, not his he's already have a case. And if that case is current, meaning only thing that she probably went over is by the action steps, the agency steps, uh, what the parent's apps are, meaning that it's, something's already in place. And it's documented that is ongoing. That's where the ball stops, you know? So

Speaker 2 (05:33):

That's my misunderstanding. Then I thought, once you signed up for LRS that they were supposed to be present at your IPS after that this is his annual,

Speaker 1 (05:44):

Right? No, it's not required only because we have already stuff contracted a vendor to work with that student on their transitional planets. Okay. Because

Speaker 2 (05:58):

What she told me, well, what the parent told me, like I said is only a 15 minute meeting and that the teacher and the ape teacher just renewed his goals from last year. Um, because he hadn't met his goals before COVID hit. Right. And they didn't mention anything. Neither. One of them mentioned anything to me about, um, job skills or anything like that. And the parents said that, um, they, they reassured her that he would have a transition meeting in may, before he finished high school to discuss transition options.

Speaker 1 (06:49):

That's true too. Okay. We normally buy seniors before they exit. We will have a transition meeting, making sure that those goals in any post step and theories services will be made available to the parents. Cause, you know, in the past it was just a bar or a brochure or some type of link with linkage document. That's why we created Caddo works. So Caddo works would be something why they were in high school that they could be, uh, working on, you know, instead of waiting to, after they graduate from high school and saying, Hey, I want a job. The Kroger's I want to work, or I want to go be a graphic designer or I wanted to go to go to some, do something instead of just saying, okay, well here's the information for LRS call the main number and make sure you have a current copy of the IEP.

Speaker 1 (07:48):

We took care of all of that. And the transition needed. Now, mind you, we have over, I think at least 15 plus high schools. Right. We cannot go to every, unfortunately every meeting. Okay. But we can make contact with those parents and those teachers and give

them those brochures. I've even given them my personal cell number, uh, because technically if they need some additional support, I'm there to support them. Okay. But yeah, they, it's not required for us to go to every meeting and always have that skill. As long as they have some point of contact. Um, that teacher is the primary person that fills out that transition page.

Speaker 2 (08:44):

Okay. Well, let me tell you what I've learned from this parent. And she she's told me she, she she's a nurse and so she's a nurse. So she, she considers herself to be educated, but when it comes to, um, all this stuff dealing with, um, her moderate son, um, she feels like she, she doesn't know nearly as enough as she needs to. And she said, because she is a nurse, a lot of the other parents talk to her because they feel like she should know more. And most of the time she says that if she finds out about something, it's because she's researched in herself and that most of the parents feel like, um, they don't, they don't have enough information.

Speaker 1 (09:45):

Okay. And in those cases, uh, for parents that feels, this is like, yeah, ideally you have six people that work for the district compared to just a parent up there is getting filtered under this, getting all of this information on, go to related services, accommodations and tests. And some of them are not comfortable enough to ask questions or to feel as if they're in a position to act ask questions. They're just as an equal partner, as any other participant at that meeting. So for parents that do feel overwhelmed or don't know what they need to do or how they need to get that information, most parents do research on their own. I had to do it, but Caddo does offer anytime. She feels that they're aware of, and they're not getting the information that they need. Uh that's when the first line they're going to ask you, did you go through the proper channel or due process? Which means, I mean, if you need to know something about how my child is going to transition, what's available, I need additional information, always putting it in writing. And you know, we have to reconvene that meeting in two weeks or 14 days or 10 days and, and demand everyone to be there. Right.

Speaker 2 (11:16):

I know that, but I don't. What I'm hearing is that the parents don't know that.

Speaker 1 (11:23):

Oh, no. Okay. Well, I worked for the state. I worked for the feds. That's what families helping families. Unfortunately, that's the only, uh, advocate for region seven. That means all the, uh, parishes for Caddo is housed for families. The families have been family gets federal and state money to be that advocate. Okay. Cause I was at transition

facilitator for reason seven for like three years. So if I get any information on school level and I forgot the other, there's another advocate, uh, app kit, uh, were there other advocates that have their own agencies that I can't think of the name, uh, just right off the top of my head, they get scape and also parish funds to help support parents through transition, through understanding the IEP. But my thing would be are you could tell her to look up families and families they have from them now moderate to severe found all walks of all walks of children and students with disabilities and help support the parents in learning well, their rights and responsibilities. Okay.

Speaker 2 ([12:51](#)):

All right. But here's, here's my question. Who's going to tell them about these agencies that are there to support them like that because they just don't know.

Speaker 1 ([13:02](#)):

Yeah. **The teachers** have boasted. It's all we give out. Do you have a, so you elementary, there's a pamphlet that has department of assessment, children, caddo parish. Cause remember we did transition funds. Okay. And cat all hasn't been doing that. Well, I mean, I just really started working there about three years ago. They only had one person for the whole parish. Well, for the whole district, you know what I mean, high schools, we have, they only have one person you applied for the same position. They here one person Theresa as the transition specialist and then could make yourself outrageous. Remember we build curriculum? Yeah. We were vocational transition curriculum specialists and we're training, uh, we're training, uh, sub teachers, we're training teachers that don't know anything about mild, moderate students. We don't PD, uh, on the different parts of unique. We're also doing lock connect, testing protocols, you know, we'll, we're assisting with, uh, equipment now we're Southern. Okay. So as we said, that just linger a little bit, but it's a lot, it's a lot, especially when you have a teacher and you have like the ones you've had students to transitioning your classroom and just the simple thing is dropping them from your roster. So somebody else can pick them up.

Speaker 2 ([14:44](#)):

Yeah. Well, yeah. I'm going through some stuff with that right now, too. So, and you know,

Speaker 1 ([14:52](#)):

As it's been, I, this year, I've never, I never really have said this, but I've been overwhelmed. I've been overwhelmed because it's just so many little things then taken up so much time.

Speaker 2 (15:05):

Well, this year is crazy. I can't, I can't believe they're actually gonna have state testing this year.

Speaker 1 (15:15):

Oh yeah. Trust me. That was my first question. Well, what are we going to do about the students that are virtual? I can't believe that we stayed open. I thought at least the last week of before Christmas break, and this is just me talking out loud with at least giving people time to heal our, their bodies to, to rest and you know, and say, okay, you know, we don't have anybody just sit on the sub or working

Speaker 1 (16:08):

Well I know North wood because so many of their staff is out in the ed and we don't have enough staff in the district to cover a lot of, uh, classes. And I just, I was kicked out because I had somebody in my family test positive to code it. So there's a, so now I'm out now my, my job is that it risk because I try to keep you guys abreast of what's going on, but you know, it's just too much, you know, now I'm going to be about a week or two behind making sure that these things and you guys are ticking. Like you need to tick. Right. That makes sense. Yeah.

Speaker 2 (16:53):

Well, yeah, me, I'm going to do what I have to do, so,

Speaker 1 (16:56):

Oh yeah. I'll have no problem. I've been in. I had any times, it's just my outliers, which is my new teachers that is not familiar with unique and not familiar with making a plan on testing. Okay. All I say is just test the ones that are transit. That's going to be my next next thing, because I've asked my director, I've asked my supervisor and that's what, that's my email tonight, make a plan on those that are present and test them and the benchmarks we've got to do the bench. Well, we got to do the big O needs to do the benchmark, but I'm talking about the state test is a whole different animal, but I'll test for QT. Right? I'm thinking about it, security. Um, so,

Speaker 2 (17:50):

Well, and here's the thing, even with, you know, doing checkpoints and benchmarks, virtually the parents or whoever the person in charge is you can tell the kids are sitting there and looking up to, to get an answer from somebody. And, uh, I don't think they realize they're hurting their child more than their helping. Um, but you know, they're

going to help with state testing if we have to do it virtually, but there's no way you can do it virtually,

Speaker 1 (18:26):

But guess what? It's something my mama always told me probably yourself, okay. Is out there. The higher ups are, and I'm going to send another email out because I wa I'm going to double check.

Speaker 2 (18:44):

Well, I say in that email, I sent it to you and Dr. S and my principal. Um, because you know, every time I ask a question, I get told, you know, we're thinking about it or we're, I haven't gotten a response from Dr. S yet about testing. And, and I'm telling my kids, you know, it's, it's only basically a month away for us, you know?

Speaker 1 (19:14):

Yeah. Then you're going to have to also think about your.

VOTAC1.2 Iotas that presented:

COLOR	Number of times it presented in the conversation	IOTA
Yellow	III	Future Programs for after high school presented by teacher
Green	I	Future programs for after high school presented to parent
Blue	III	Does parent feel supported
Pink		Did research provide any help in the collaboration process